Schafer, Joseph

A history of the
Pacific Northwest

HISTORY OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

JOSEPH SCHAFER

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A HISTORY

OF

THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

BY

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WITH MAPS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

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To

FREDERIC G. YOUNG, A.B.

Professor of Economics and Sociology, University of Oregon

WHOSE WORK AS SECRETARY OF THE OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY FROM THE TIME OF ITS FOUNDATION HAS SIMPLIFIED THE TASK OF EVERY INVESTIGATOR IN THE FIELD OF NORTHWESTERN HISTORY

PREFACE

THIS little book is an attempt to relate, in simple, readable style, the impressive story of civilization building in the region once called Oregon, but now known as the Pacific Northwest. The boundaries of this territory embrace the three states of Oregon, Washington, and Idaho, the first of which, as the oldest member of the sisterhood, retains the original name of the whole.

The division into states should not disguise to us the fact that northwestern history is more remarkable for its unity than its diversity. And only by treating it as one rather than three distinct movements can a correct view of the whole be obtained. This principle will unquestionably hold good for all matters save the purely political; in order to treat these fully, it would of course be necessary to consider each of the three states by itself.

It has seemed to me, however, that after passing the intensely interesting period of the

Oregon provisional government, politics should occupy only a very few pages in so small a volume. The organization and operation of new state governments in this region differs little from similar activities in other territory belonging to the United States. But the processes by which the wilderness was subdued, homes multiplied, cities built, commerce extended to all parts of the world, and a great civilization developed in this remote and once inaccessible portion of our continent, — these are not mere replications of what had previously taken place elsewhere. The unfolding of these processes, under the special physical conditions prevailing here, gives to the history of the region a charm belonging to itself alone. I have, therefore, adopted the plan of treating the early period with considerable fullness, devoting to it fourteen chapters, and making the remaining five chapters practically a sketch of progress in the Pacific Northwest from 1849 to the present time.

In preparing the book, I have naturally gained much assistance from the works of earlier writers in the same field, especially from those volumes of the H. H. Bancroft

series which relate especially to this region. But it has been my rule not to rely upon secondary authorities, unless compelled to, except in matters of secondary importance. For the most part it has been possible, with a large expenditure of time and effort and through the generosity of many kind friends, to procure the actual sources. Moreover, a mass of documents, fortunately discovered in the course of these researches, will now be used for the first time in this volume, and more fully in my forthcoming "History of the Pacific Slope and Alaska."

Much as I would like to mention here the names of all who gave any assistance during the performance of this task, the limits of space make it impracticable to do so. In some cases the service was necessarily slight, but uniformly rendered with heartiness and good will; in others it was of considerable moment, and in a few instances absolutely essential to the success of the work.

For the use of indispensable sources I am under special obligations to Professor F. G. Young, secretary of the Oregon Historical Society, and to Mr. George H. Himes, the

assistant secretary; to Reuben Gold Thwaites, LL.D., superintendent of the Wisconsin Historical Library, and Mr. Isaac S. Bradley, the librarian; also to Hon. C. B. Bagley of Seattle, and Hon. F. V. Holman of Portland. Some things of considerable importance were secured through the courtesy of those in charge of the Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis; the State Historical Society of Missouri, Columbia; the Mercantile Library, St. Louis; the Kansas Historical Society, Topeka; and the California State Library, Sacramento.

To the Hon. H. W. Scott, editor of the Portland *Oregonian*, I am indebted for suggestions which proved very helpful in determining the general plan and scope of the work; and to Dr. J. R. Wilson, principal of the Portland Academy, for a critical examination of the matter and form of the book. Several of my colleagues at the University, Miss Camilla Leach, Professor F. S. Dunn, and Professor H. D. Sheldon, read portions of the manuscript and offered valuable suggestions. Mrs. Florence Baker Hays of Boise, Idaho, collected for me a portion of the matter appearing in the Appendix. Nearly all of the proofs have

passed through the hands of Rev. E. Clarence Oakley, of Eugene. My wife, Lily Abbott Schafer, has given me assistance and encouragement at every stage of the work.

It is pleasing to reflect that by a fortunate chance this little volume makes its appearance very near the time (June 1, 1905) set for the opening of the World's Fair at Portland, Oregon. Since the exposition was planned to commemorate the achievement of Lewis and Clark, its intimate relation to the subject of this history is apparent. If the book serves to contribute, even slightly, to that powerful historical impulse which the Lewis and Clark Exposition illustrates, and especially if it shall promote a more intelligent interest in northwestern history among the youth of this region, for whom it is primarily intended, I shall feel amply repaid for the labor bestowed upon it.

JOSEPH SCHAFER.

University of Oregon,
Eugene, March 20, 1905.

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A HISTORY OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

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CHAPTER I

EARLY EXPLORERS OF THE PACIFIC COAST

Scope of the chapter

It is a far cry from the Isthmus of Panama to the icy capes above Bering's Strait; and the explorations which unveiled that long coast line form a thrilling chapter in the history of our continent. The story opens on the 25th of September, 1513, when Balboa, surrounded by sixty Spanish companions, stood on a peak of the Darien Mountains and gazed, with the rapture of a discoverer, upon the waters of the South Sea. It closes two hundred and sixty-five years later, when Captain Cook rounded "the Northwestern point of all America," and named it Cape Prince of Wales. The earlier portion of these explorations, covering nearly one hundred years, will be treated in the present chapter.

Importance of Balboa's discovery

Balboa, on first beholding the Pacific, made a formal declaration that all its coasts belonged, by right of discovery, to the king of Spain. Four days later he reached the shore at the Gulf of San Miguel, and repeated the cere-

mony of taking possession, this time marching into the surf at the head of his party. While such formalities usually have little effect upon the course of history, the discovery itself was a great triumph for the Spanish government. Since the time of Columbus, their navigators had been searching among the West Indies, and along the Atlantic coast of South and Central America, in the blind hope of finding an open passage to the Orient. They failed because, as it was supposed, nature had sown islands so thickly in this part of the ocean that it was very difficult for ships to pick their way among them. The numerous failures had discouraged many; but when Balboa reached the open sea by marching overland a few miles from the Darien coast, no one any longer doubted that a convenient westward route existed. It was generally supposed that this would be found to the north of the Isthmus. Magellan soon afterward proved that there was a way around South America, but it was very difficult, and far out of the direct course from Europe to eastern Asia. The necessity still remained, therefore, to find a "strait," and the discovery of the Pacific stimulated the search in an extraordinary manner.

The search for a strait

During the entire history of navigation no mere idea or hope has been followed out with greater persistence. The belief in a strait

became almost universal among commercial peoples, and to find it was the ambition of seafarers throughout the world. It was this, in part, which brought out so quickly the geography of the Atlantic coast of North America, and induced so many explorers to enter the water courses leading to the interior of the continent. Each newly discovered estuary, every deep indentation of the coast, was confidently expected to afford the coveted highway; until, as we shall see, after a long series of failures by Spaniards and others in the south, the British mariners turned to seek a Northwest Passage in the region of Hudson Bay.

Reasons for exploring the Pacific coast

The people most interested in the search for a strait during the sixteenth century were the Spaniards. Portugal had been the great rival of Spain in the effort to find a water route to the Indies, and her famous navigator, Vasco da Gama, had opened the way around Africa while Columbus and his followers were vainly trying to reach Asia by sailing west. The Portuguese had a monopoly of this route, and were growing rich from the profits of the spice trade with the Moluccas. In order to share in this commerce it was necessary for the Spaniards to complete the western highway to the Orient by the discovery of the indispensable strait. As a footing had been obtained on the Pacific coast of Central America it was determined to follow

up the search from that as well as from the Atlantic side.

Balboa and his successors

The first ships to sail upon the South Sea were launched by Balboa himself in the year 1517. They were built on the Panama coast, some of the timbers for their construction having been carried across the mountains on the backs of Indian slaves. The hundreds of natives who perished under the lash during this terrible march constituted the first bloody sacrifice to the Spirit of the Western Sea. Aside from building the vessels very little was achieved by Balboa. He coasted along the shore for some distance, gathered gold and pearls from the tribes in those regions, and returned to the colony on the opposite side of the mountains where he was put to death by political enemies. About six years later, however, two other Spaniards explored northwestward from Panama as far as the Gulf of Fonseca, discovering Lake Nicaragua. This, it was hoped, with the stream flowing from it to the Atlantic, and a very short canal through the level ground on the west, might give them a passage from ocean to ocean. Thus early (1523) was suggested the idea of an interoceanic canal.

Mexico

By this time the Spaniards were in possession of the rich valley of Mexico, where Cortez had recently overthrown the power of the Aztec confederacy. It was the most important terri-

tory of the New World yet brought under subjection by Europeans. The land was rich, its resources were varied, and the position it occupied between the two seas was a commanding one. The colony planted in Mexico became a center for new explorations, carried on both north and south, by land and by sea.

Cortez becomes an explorer

Cortez, ever on the lookout for opportunities of further conquest, sent his military expeditions toward the west, and soon learned of a great ocean which he judged to be the same as Balboa's South Sea. The news made a deep impression upon his imagination. Military successes had already brought him riches, and a fame which reached to all countries of the civilized world; but Cortez saw that here was the gateway to greater wealth and a more enduring renown. By exploring the Pacific he expected to find many islands abounding in gold and other riches. He hoped, also, to reach the Moluccas, and above all, he was anxious to find the strait so ardently desired by the king of Spain. He therefore established a naval station on the west coast of Mexico and soon began sending expeditions toward the north. Some of his ships were lost, and large sums of money spent, but no very important results were obtained until 1539.[1] In that year Cortez

[1] The southern end of the California Peninsula was discovered in 1534. It was supposed to be an island. The attempt to plant a colony there failed.

sent out Ulloa, with three ships, to trace the Mexican coast northward. One vessel was soon lost. With the two remaining the mariner held his course till he approached the head of the Gulf of California. Tacking about he now passed along the shore of the peninsula to the cape which forms its southern extremity. Rounding this dangerous headland he beat up the outer coast as far as Cedros Island (latitude 28°). From this expedition Ulloa and his flagship never returned, although the surviving vessel reached Mexico in the following year. Cortez meantime returned to Spain (1540) and died there a few years later (1547).

Alarçon's voyage

Readers of early American history are familiar with the romantic story of Coronado: how he was dispatched from Mexico, in 1540, in search of the mythical golden cities, or Cities of Cibola, of which rumors had recently been brought from the north. At this time the viceroy of Mexico was Cortez's rival, Mendoza; and he, in order to increase the chances of Coronado's success, sent a fleet under Alarçon to support the land expedition. Alarçon reached the head of the Gulf, as Ulloa had done before him, and, leaving his ships at the entrance to the Colorado River, ascended the stream in small boats as far as its junction with the Gila. This proved that the land stretching toward the southwest was a peninsula and not an

island. The name *California*, now known to have been derived from a sixteenth-century Spanish novel, was first applied to the country about this time. In its original use it signifies a fabulous island, situated not far "from the terrestrial paradise," and inhabited by a gigantic race of women.

Voyage of Cabrillo and Ferelo

While the outlines of the California Gulf and Peninsula had been made known, the explorations thus far had revealed no part of the present western coast of the United States. The time was come for another forward movement, destined to carry the Spaniards many leagues further toward the Arctic Sea. Viceroy Mendoza had recently become much interested in exploration, and was not to be outdone by Cortez, the patron of Ulloa. In 1542 he commissioned Cabrillo to explore the coast northward along the peninsula. This navigator passed Cedros Island, and on the 28th of September anchored in a good harbor which received from him the name of San Miguel, but was later called San Diego. So far as we know this was the first visit of white men to the coast of Upper California. Cabrillo had two ships and supplies for a long cruise. After surveying the new-found harbor, he proceeded leisurely northward, anchoring at a number of points. He showed much interest in the landscapes presented by these strange coasts, and

noted the ever changing forms of the mountains, plains, and valleys. The natives, too, received a share of Cabrillo's attention, and he describes the habitations, dress, food, and canoes of those that came most directly under his eye. After examining the coast as far as Monterey,

THE MISSION OF SAN CARLOS, NEAR MONTEREY.

and perhaps somewhat farther, Cabrillo was driven southward to San Miguel Island, where he died, January 3, 1543. The chief command now fell to the pilot, Ferelo, who, like Cabrillo, was an able navigator, ambitious to win fame for himself and glory for his sovereign. Carrying out the dying command of his superior, Ferelo sailed northward. On this cruise the vessels passed up the coast beyond Monterey,

possibly to the parallel of 42°, though probably not quite so far. Thus the first thirty years of Spanish exploration along the Pacific gave to the world a map of that coast from Panama to near the northern boundary of California.

Spain dominates the Pacific coast

Spain was now by far the most powerful state of Europe, and her sovereign, Charles the Fifth, the greatest king in Christendom. It was not strange, therefore, that she should attempt to monopolize the New World, or that other nations, like France and England, should be slow to lay claim to those regions. Spaniards were exploring the Atlantic coast, as well as the interior of North America; under Magellan they had already rounded the southern continent, and discovered a passage — although a dangerous one — to the Pacific; they were reaping a golden harvest from the mines of Peru and Mexico.[1] The Pacific Ocean, west of the two Americas, was practically a Spanish sea. No other power seemed likely to disturb these waters, unless some easier passage from the Atlantic should be found than the treacherous Straits of Magellan. Men felt as secure on that long coast line, stretching through more

[1] Soon after this the Spaniards also began a regular trade with the Orient by way of Mexico and the Philippine Islands. Magellan had discovered the Philippines on his famous voyage around the world, and lost his life there. About 1564 Spain began to colonize the islands, and then a trade sprang up which became very important.

than a hundred degrees of latitude, as they did in the interior of Spain itself.

Origin of Drake's expedition

In this agreeable delusion Spanish colonists and merchants along the Pacific whiled away the peaceful years till a new generation came upon the stage of history. Then suddenly an event occurred which startled them from their repose. This was the buccaneering voyage of Sir Francis Drake, which took place in the years 1577 to 1580. Drake was one of those daring English seamen who made the reign of Queen Elizabeth as famous for its maritime enterprise as it became for its literature through such men as Shakespeare and Spenser. He sailed from Plymouth with five ships December 13, 1577, having first secured Elizabeth's consent to carry on private war against the hated Spaniards in the New World. The voyage is described in a quaint, interesting manner, by the chaplain of the expedition, Francis Fletcher, whose book has been published under the title, "The World Encompassed by Sir Francis Drake." Fletcher naturally makes a hero of the Captain, describing him as a brilliant leader in battle, a stern but righteous judge, and a commander whose will few dared to disobey. At times he could be the jovial companion of sailors and officers, drinking and carousing with as little conscience as the rest. But when danger threatened, or death seemed

imminent, he could also lead them in their prayers, and preach the hopeful doctrines of the Christian church.

His voyage along the Pacific coast

Nearly a year passed, after leaving England, before the ships emerged from the Straits of Magellan; and as they did so a furious storm drove them hundreds of leagues into unknown southern waters, and made it impossible for them to keep together. The remainder of the long cruise was made by Drake in the single ship *Golden Hind*, the other vessels all forsaking him. For many months he plowed the waters along the coasts of South and Central America, committing depredations which would be incredible except for the defenseless condition of the Spaniards. Not satisfied with attacking ships on the high seas, and forcing them to surrender, he ran into the harbors, where vessels of all descriptions were collected, and where they were supposed to be perfectly safe from harm. Sometimes he set fire to ships and fled; again he would capture rich cargoes, and get safely away before the Spaniards could offer the least interference. But the larger part of his booty was obtained by the capture of Spanish "treasure ships." One of these yielded him enormous wealth in bar gold, silver, gems, and plate. The vessel was called the *Cacafuego* or *Spit-fire:* after her capture a Spanish wag suggested that she be rechristened and

given the more appropriate name *Caca-plata*, *Spit-silver*. In these exploits the English captain and his men showed all the bravery and daring for which the corsairs of the time were noted; they also showed some of the less amiable qualities belonging to men of their class the world over.

New Albion

One of the objects of Drake's expedition was to find the passage leading from the Pacific to the Atlantic. Accordingly, after his ship was gorged with plunder, he made sail to the north, running up to the parallel of 42°, or perhaps 43°. By this time, we are informed, the men began to suffer severely from the cold, although it was midsummer, and therefore, on the 17th of June (1579), Drake ran into a very good harbor in latitude 38° 30′. It is supposed that this was the opening just above San Francisco which modern geographers call Drake's Bay.[1] In the California harbor, Drake repaired his vessel as well as he could and prepared for the later cruise. He made some explorations toward the interior, and gained great influence over the natives about the bay, who begged him to remain in the country. They agreed, as the narrator declares, to accept the English

[1] There is no probability that the Englishman saw the great harbor of northern California, although some writers have strangely sought to derive its saintly name from this terrible sea rover.

queen as their sovereign. Drake went through the formality of taking possession of the land in her name, and called the region "New Albion," partly on account of the white banks and cliffs along the shore, partly to fix upon it a name sometimes applied to the Island Kingdom across the seas. We know very well that almost, if not quite, the entire coast line seen by Drake had been skirted by Spanish navigators from Mexico a generation earlier; yet he pretended to believe that the Spaniards had never "had any dealing, or so much as set foot in this country, the utmost of their discoveries reaching only to many degrees southward of this place."

The return to England

Instead of continuing the search for a passage into the Atlantic, the Englishman decided it would be wiser to carry his cargo into safe seas by the least dangerous route. He knew the Spaniards in the south would be guarding the coast, as well as the Straits of Magellan. Drake therefore struck boldly across the Pacific, rounded the Cape of Good Hope, and accomplished the second circumnavigation of the globe. His ship reëntered Plymouth harbor on the 26th of September, "in the just and ordinary reckoning of those that stayed at home." The seafarers had of course gained a day. Queen Elizabeth was so well pleased with the exploits of her valiant captain that she visited

Drake's ship, examined the treasures on board, and before leaving the deck conferred upon him the honor of knighthood.

Vizcaino's expedition

Drake's voyage produced great consternation among the Spanish colonists, and many plans were made to prevent others from committing similar outrages. One scheme was to explore the coast of Upper California, and establish forts at one or two good harbors. This was important for commercial reasons, also, as the ships trading to the Philippines, on their return to Mexico along the California coast, needed some place to refit. Sebastian Vizcaino, a Spanish navigator, made the necessary explorations in 1602–1603. He advised the government to fortify both Monterey and San Diego harbors, but nothing was done for many years. The expedition of Vizcaino marks the end of the early period of exploring activity on the Pacific coast. The seventeenth century, and the first half of the eighteenth, saw no discoveries. The "Manila ships," as the vessels trading to the Philippines were called, were almost the only Spanish craft to approach the coast of Upper California during that long interval. The tribes and peoples seen by Cabrillo, Drake, and Vizcaino, continued to war among themselves, in their barbarous way, unchecked by the presence of a superior race. California remained a wilderness.

CHAPTER II

THE NORTHWEST COAST AND ALASKA

The decline of Spain

THE one hundred and sixty years following the voyage of Vizcaino witnessed great changes in the relative power of Spain. Her decline began toward the close of the sixteenth century, and in 1588 the English fleet, officered by superb seamen like Howard and Drake, destroyed the Spanish Armada, which had threatened the ruin of England. From this time the other nations of Europe no longer feared Spain, and three of them, — England, France, and Holland, — began to colonize the New World. The founding of Jamestown in 1607, Quebec one year later, and the trading post at Manhattan Island in 1613, gave each of these states a foothold on the Atlantic coast, all of which had been claimed by Spain under the name of Florida. In the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries England was enabled, largely through the growth of her navy, to outstrip all of the other colonizing powers, and to gain at last the entire eastern half of North America. Holland was forced to give up her colony in 1664; and France gave up Canada, together with the

country between the Alleghanies and the Mississippi, in 1763. Spain was pushed down into the peninsula of Florida, remaining there till 1763, when she was compelled, for a time, to retire beyond the Mississippi.[1]

Her unsafe condition on the Pacific coast

These changes seriously affected the position of Spain on the Pacific coast. Her people feared that Great Britain would attack them on that side as they had already successfully done on the Atlantic. British navigators were at this time earnestly trying to discover the Northwest Passage from Hudson Bay to the Pacific. Should they be so fortunate as to find it, and gain a foothold on the west coast, the days of Spanish supremacy would be numbered. This was one of the alarming conditions which roused the Spaniards from their sleep of a hundred and sixty years. Another danger threatened from the north, where the Russians had already made various discoveries, including Bering's Strait and some points on the coast of Alaska. There was nothing to prevent these hardy northerners from pushing down the coast line at their own good pleasure.

The remedy; northern expansion

But the people of Mexico, supported by the Spanish government, now showed themselves capable of making extraordinary exertions for the safety of the state. They proposed a great plan of northern expansion, which included

[1] During a brief period, 1763–1783, England controlled Florida.

three points. First, they were to plant colonies and build forts at the harbors of San Diego and Monterey, as Vizcaino had recommended in 1603. Next, the entire region of Upper California was to be brought under Spanish rule. Lastly, they were to undertake further explorations by sea from Monterey to the vicinity of the Russian settlements on the North Pacific. In connection with the plan of conquest it was decided to establish a number of missions, such as already existed throughout the California Peninsula, for the purpose of Christianizing the northern Indians. Father Junipero Serra, a devout Franciscan friar, was placed in charge of the missionary arrangements.

Planting the California missions and presidios

Early in 1769, two ships were sent northward to the harbor of San Diego, and at the same time two companies of colonists, each with a herd of cattle, marched overland from the northern missions of the peninsula. The total number of persons setting out by land and sea was two hundred and nineteen; but when the expeditions reached their destination it was found that only one hundred and twenty-six remained. This heroic little band hoped to conquer the vast stretches of wilderness comprised within the present boundaries of California. On the 16th of July (1769) they founded the first of the series of missions at San Diego,

where a fort, or presidio, was also established. Monterey was occupied in the following year, the harbor fortified, and the mission of San Carlos begun. This place became the capital of Upper California. Year by year other missions were established, that of San Francisco, the sixth in number, dating from October, 1776.

Juan Perez and the discovery of the Northwest Coast

As soon as the work of colonization was well under way the leaders turned their attention to the explorations, which were a part of the great plan for extending the influence of Spain toward the north. The first expedition was intrusted to Juan Perez, a naval officer of first rank, who had been in charge of the California fleet. His ship was the *Santiago*, one of the few vessels whose names deserve to be recorded in a history of the Pacific Northwest. When all was in readiness for the departure, the officers and men gathered on the shore where some of the priests celebrated mass, and next morning (June 11, 1774) the *Santiago* was towed out of the harbor.[1] For a number of days she drifted southward under adverse winds, and it was not till the 5th of July that the 42d parallel was passed. Thereafter Perez sailed steadily northward far from shore, intending

[1] Two priests accompanied the expedition, and fortunately each of them left us a diary giving a detailed history of the voyage. This brief account of the voyage is prepared from these journals.

to reach the latitude of 60° before making land. But running short of water, on the 15th of July he put about to the east, and five days later reached the coast near the southern limits of Alaska. He named the place Santa Margarita. Many Indians came off from shore in their canoes, but they were very timid and only gradually gained courage to approach the ship. This shows that the sight of white men was new to them. After a time they brought otter skins, mats, and nicely woven hats made of rushes, to exchange for cast-off clothing, knives, beads, and ribbons. These Indians had among them a few iron rings and other metal trinkets, which some suppose to have come from the far-off British trading post at Hudson Bay. In that case they must have been passed on from one tribe to another across the continent.

The exploration of the northern coast

Although his instructions required Perez to reach the parallel of 60°, he decided that the condition of his vessel and crew would not permit him to go farther. He therefore turned to explore the land southward to California. After running along the coast about six degrees, he entered a "C"-shaped harbor just above the present American boundary line (49°) which he named San Lorenzo. Here, too, the natives were afraid of the Spaniards; but when their timidity was overcome, they

were glad to exchange the most beautiful otter skins for bits of ribbon or a few worthless shells. From San Lorenzo the course of the *Santiago* was almost continuously southward. At frequent intervals she was so close inshore that the land stood clearly revealed to those on board. On the 27th of August, after an absence of two months and a half, the good ship anchored safely in the harbor of Monterey. "Thanks be to God," the pious chronicler exclaims, "who has permitted us to arrive most happily at this port, although we suffer the disappointment of not having gained our chief end, which was to go as far north as sixty degrees of latitude, there to go ashore and raise the standard of the holy cross."

Heceta's discovery

Perez had made a general exploration of the entire Northwest Coast, from the parallel of 42° to 54° 40′, but he had failed to reach the region visited by the Russians.[1] In the following year, therefore, a new expedition was fitted out, this time under the command of Captain Bruno Heceta. One of his vessels was the already famous *Santiago*, the other was a small ship named the *Sonora*. Heceta sailed under instructions to reach the latitude of 65°. At a point near Fuca's Straits (Point Grenville) he

[1] The term "Northwest Coast" is usually applied to the region between these parallels, and includes what now is comprised in the coasts of Oregon, Washington, and British Columbia.

landed and went through the ceremony of taking possession of the country. Soon after this he decided for no very good reason, so far as we can see, to return to California. On the 17th of August, while running southward along the coast, he discovered "a bay with strong eddies and currents, indicating the mouth of a large river or strait."[1] Heceta did not enter this stream. Had he done so the River of the West might to-day be known under a different name from that with which we are all familiar; for there is no doubt that the Spanish navigator describes the bay at the mouth of the Columbia.

Cuadra reaches latitude 58°

The *Sonora*, commanded by Cuadra, had been separated from the flagship, and when Heceta turned southward her intrepid captain was left to follow his own inclinations. He first ran many leagues to the west, and then veering about northward, finally saw (in latitude 57°) the snowy peak of a great mountain, to which he gave the name of "San Jacinto." Opposite this he landed, and for the second time the coast of the North Pacific was formally claimed as a part of the dominions of Spain. Before turning southward he reached the latitude of 58°. Since the Russians had already seen points in Alaska from the 65th to the 60th parallels, this voyage nearly completes the first general exploration of the Pacific Coast.

[1] The quotation is from Bancroft, "Northwest Coast," I, p. 163.

Origin of Cook's expedition

We have now reached an important turning point in the history of the Northwest Coast. The fears of the Spanish were about to be realized; for in 1776 the British government resolved to send to the Pacific the first explorer to enter those waters from England since the voyage of Sir Francis Drake. The object of the new expedition was to find a passage eastward, around the northern end of North America, from Bering's Strait. During the early part of the seventeenth century Great Britain had sacrificed valuable lives in the effort to find a Northwest Passage from the Atlantic into the Pacific. Henry Hudson, for example, perished in the great bay which bears his name; but all to no effect. Then, for more than one hundred years, very little was done. About 1750 the subject of the Northwest Passage came up prominently once more and could never afterward be dismissed. By this time it was known that North America was separated from Asia by a strait which extended north and south; for the Danish navigator Vitus Bering, while exploring for the Russian government in 1728, had passed around the northeastern point of Asia, and a few years later (1741) had crossed over to the coast of Alaska. It was also known that there was open sea far to the northwest of Hudson Bay; for in the years 1769–1772

Samuel Hearne, who was sent out by the Hudson's Bay Company, had traversed a thousand miles of wilderness from the Hudson's Bay post on Churchill River, and traced the Coppermine River to its outlet in a northern ocean. This encouraged the British government to begin the search once more, starting from two opposite points, Baffin's Bay on the east and Bering's Strait on the west. For the second part of this enterprise they selected their greatest explorer, Captain James Cook. He had distinguished himself during the preceding half-dozen years by the discovery of New Zealand and other islands in the South Pacific, and by exploring the coasts of Australia. He was fitted out in the most complete fashion with two excellent ships, the *Discovery* and the *Resolution*. The latter, his flagship, was the vessel in which Cook had made his long cruise in the Pacific during the years 1772–1774.

Cook's instructions

Cook's instructions were issued on the 6th of July (1776), and he sailed on the 12th of the same month. He was ordered to enter the South Pacific, and after making some further explorations in those waters, to run to the coast of "New Albion." He was then to explore northward to 65°, and endeavor to find a way from Bering's Strait into the Atlantic. Aside from their main features, the instructions are interesting in two other particulars. The

first is the allusion to Drake's pretended discoveries of two centuries earlier; the second is the date, which Americans will recognize as strangely near the time when the English colonies on the Atlantic declared their independence of the mother country. It would almost seem as if Great Britain was making

TEREOBOO, KING OF OWYHEE, BRINGING PRESENTS TO CAPTAIN COOK.

haste to gain an empire on the Pacific which might partly recompense her for losses on the opposite coast.

He discovers the Sandwich Islands

After spending about eighteen months in southern waters, Cook sailed northward, and early in January, 1778, discovered a group of islands to which he gave the name of his patron, the Earl of Sandwich. Two months later he came in sight of the Oregon coast in

about latitude 44°. He then ran up the coast to the 47th parallel, where he commenced a careful search for a strait. An old tradition, published in England as early as 1625, declared that an Italian pilot, Juan de Fuca, had once entered an inlet on this part of the coast, and sailed without interruption through to the Atlantic. This was exactly the sort of passage for which the British were seeking. Cook examined the supposed locality of the inlet with great attention but no success. He was convinced that the story of Juan de Fuca was a myth, like so many other mariner's tales.[1]

From Nootka Sound northward

In about latitude 49° Cook probably entered the identical harbor which Perez had named San Lorenzo. To this he gave the now well-known name of Nootka Sound. Hundreds of Indians crowded around the vessel in their canoes, bringing skins and furs for barter with the sailors. Hoisting his anchors and steering northwest, Cook saw San Jacinto Mountain, so named by Cuadra three years before. To this the Englishman gave the new name "Mt. Edgecumbe," by which it is still known. In latitude 60° he saw another towering peak, and learning that the Russians had given the name "St. Elias" to some point in this vicinity,

[1] A few years later (1787) an inlet was found in this latitude by Barclay, another Englishman, and named after the Italian pilot of the sixteenth century, the Straits of Juan de Fuca.

he applied it to the imposing mountain whose glistening summit is such a conspicuous landmark to all mariners sailing along the coast of Alaska. In a way it separated the explorations which had been carried on by the Russians at intervals since 1728 from those recently made by the Spaniards. Cook held his course northwestward, searching the coast for an eastward passage, and finally sailed through Bering's Strait. It was the 9th of August, 1778, when he reached "the northwestern extremity of all America," in latitude 65° 48′. Directly opposite he found the northeasternmost point of the Asiatic continent. The former he called "Cape Prince of Wales," the latter "East Cape." It was already too late in the season to attempt a passage through the northern sea, and therefore Cook turned southward to spend the winter in the new tropical islands discovered at the opening of the year. Unfortunately, through some misunderstanding with the inhabitants of Hawaii, the great captain was attacked and killed by these barbarians, February 16, 1779.

Death of Captain Cook

The map of the Pacific coast completed

Cook was not the discoverer of the Northwest Coast. That honor belongs to the Spaniards, while the Russians were first on the coast of Alaska. But in 1778 there were no carefully drawn charts to show what had already been achieved. Many rumors, and a few written statements, containing a mixture of fact

and fable, were all that the English navigator had to rely upon. His exploration was, therefore, independent of all the preceding, and his surveys were more accurate than any which had yet been made. While much still remained to be done in the way of filling in details, it is no mere fancy to say that Cook had completed the work which Balboa began. The map of the western coast line of our continent had been traced, amid mighty perils by sea and shore, testing the valor of seven generations.

CHAPTER III

NOOTKA SOUND AND THE COLUMBIA

First sale of sea-otter skins in Canton

THE voyage of Captain Cook had one result which neither he nor the British government foresaw. At various points along the Northwest Coast, as Nootka Sound and Cook Inlet, the natives crowded about the ships to exchange sea-otter and other skins for any attractive baubles the white man cared to sell. No one suspected the true value of these furs, and those who made the purchases intended them merely for clothing. But when the ships of the exploring squadron touched at Canton, China, on the return voyage to England, officers and men sold the remains of their otter-skin garments, and a few unused furs, at prices which seemed almost fabulous. "Skins which did not cost the purchaser sixpence sterling," writes one of the men, "sold for one hundred dollars." The excitement on shipboard was intense. The crew wished to return at once, secure a cargo of furs in the Northwest, and make their fortunes. When the officers refused, they begged, blustered, and even threatened mutiny, in order to gain their object, but of course in vain.

The world becomes interested in the Northwest Coast

The discovery of the value of sea-otter skins in the Canton market instantly changed the thought of the world with respect to the Northwest Coast. The region abounded in furs, but thus far had not been visited for commercial purposes. Great Britain and Spain had sent their navigators into these waters for other reasons. The one desired to explore the coast in order to confirm her ancient claim of sovereignty over it; the other hoped to find, half hidden by some jagged cape, the long-sought highway to the eastern sea. When the news of this commercial discovery reached Europe it created widespread interest, and erelong ships flying the colors of England, of France, and of Portugal, began regularly to visit the Northwest Coast. Those of Spain and of the United States soon followed. In a few years men of every nation could be found among the crews that searched the coves and inlets, wherever the presence of Indian tribes gave promise of a profitable trade.

Early fur trade and its results

The first of these trading craft arrived from the coast of China in 1785. It was a small ship, apparently flying the Portuguese flag, but commanded by an Englishman, James Hanna. He secured a cargo of five hundred and sixty sea-otter skins, which, on the return to China, were sold for more than twenty thousand dollars. No season passed thereafter in which the

natives living on the best-known harbors of the North Pacific were unable to dispose of their furs. Gradually the traders explored new portions of the coast, and thus, year by year, other tribes were brought under the influence of the trade. In the course of the first ten years

NOOTKA HARBOR, 1788.
Launching the *Northwest America*.

this commercial activity gave rise to two most interesting historical episodes, to which we must now give attention. They were the Nootka Sound controversy and the discovery of the Columbia.

Nootka Sound

Nootka Sound, lying just north of the 49th parallel, contained several of the best harbors thus far discovered in the Northwest. With

deep, quiet water, and high rugged shores, it afforded ideal anchoring places for ships arriving in distress after the long and often stormy passage across the Pacific. Its favorable location on the line of coast made it convenient, also, as a center for trading expeditions carried on to the north and south. As a result, this place became a kind of international resort for ships engaged in the fur trade.

Spanish rights threatened by Russia

We have not forgotten, however, that the entire coast was claimed by Spain. Her title was as old as the discovery of Balboa, who took possession of all the coasts of the Pacific as he stood upon the mountain peak in Darien. It had been strengthened at an early time by the explorations of Cortez, Ulloa, Cabrillo, and others; and later by the conquest of California, the northern voyages of Perez, Heceta, and Cuadra. But in spite of all theories of sovereignty, the Russians, who discovered Alaska and the adjacent islands, had already pushed down the coast to the parallel of 60°, and according to rumors which had floated southward were threatening to go farther. Something must be done to stop these encroachments. In 1788 the Spanish government sent out a squadron under Martinez and Haro to gather exact information concerning the doings of these Northerners. They did not find a Russian settlement at Nootka, as they had feared, but met traders of that nation

farther up the coast who spoke as if there was a plan to take possession of this important harbor. The Spaniards learned, also, that Nootka was the favorite rendezvous for the British and other ships engaged in the northern trade.

The Nootka Sound controversy

On the return of the Spanish fleet to Mexico it was at once decided to send the same officers to the upper seas in the following year, with instructions to fortify Nootka Sound. This was done, but in carrying out his orders Captain Martinez seized two British vessels belonging to a company represented by Lieutenant John Meares.[1] This incident occurred in the summer of 1789, and resulted in a diplomatic controversy and preparations for war by both Spain and Great Britain. When the contest was ended by the so-called Nootka Convention (November 29, 1790), Spain was no longer, even in theory, the sovereign of the Northwest Coast. By this treaty she gave up her exclusive claims, and acknowledged that British subjects had equal rights with her own to trade or make settlements "in places not already occupied"; that is, anywhere north of California.

The settlement of the Nootka Sound controversy had special importance for the United

[1] Two other vessels were temporarily detained, but as these floated the Portuguese flag and were taken under different circumstances from the ships mentioned above, it is sufficient merely to allude to them. The vessels over which the controversy arose were the *Princess Royal* and *Argonaut*.

States. It not only secured rights of trade for British subjects, but practically opened the North Pacific to the commerce of every nation. Spain never took an active interest in the fur trade, and after 1790 she withdrew down the coast to California. England, too, on account of the long European wars which began about this time, found little chance, during the next twenty years, to follow up the advantage she had gained. In the meantime, the North Pacific may almost be said to have become an American lake. The keen traders and dauntless whalers of New England, coming up around Cape Horn, had taken possession, and were reaping a rich reward. Let us trace the origin and some of the most noteworthy results of this new activity on the Pacific coast.

Effect upon the United States

When Captain Cook sailed from Plymouth (England) in July, 1776, he had on board his flagship an American named John Ledyard. This young sailor was a native of Connecticut, who had spent his youth in "the land of steady habits" without finding any steady or settled business to suit his taste. An adventurer by nature, he was always looking for new and exciting enterprises. As a youth he attended Dartmouth College, then a small school, located beyond the bounds of settlement on the upper Connecticut. Ledyard intended to prepare for missionary work among the Indians; but after

John Ledyard

spending some time at college he gave up this plan and decided to leave the institution. He had been a peculiar boy in school, and he was more peculiar in his manner of getting home. Felling a great tree on the bank of the river, he hollowed it out to make a canoe; then, with a bearskin for a bed and a few books as his sole companions, this enterprising navigator actually accomplished the long river voyage from Hanover, New Hampshire, to Hartford, Connecticut.

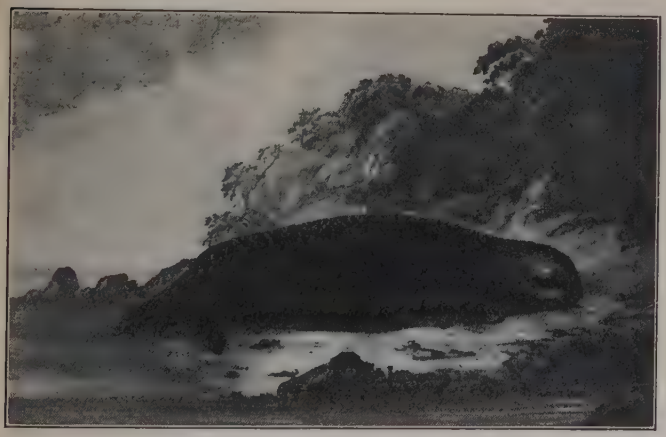
His services on Cook's expedition

A little later he made up his mind to become a seaman, and secured a place on a ship belonging to the British navy. Being in England when Cook's expedition was preparing, he called to see the great captain and was given the post of corporal of marines. His services on the long voyage were of great value. He was vigorous, alert, intelligent, and good-natured; was always ready to take more than his share of the hard duties; and went at them with enthusiasm if they promised any novelties. While the ships were in northern waters he volunteered to explore the island of Onalaska, and in Hawaii amused himself by climbing the loftiest mountain peak of the island. From each expedition he brought back important information.

After the fleet returned to Great Britain Ledyard was transferred to a warship, bound

for Long Island Sound. This was just at the close of the Revolutionary War. The treaty of peace had not been signed; but the fighting was over, and the young corporal felt morally justified in leaving the ship. He escaped to his old home, found the mother he had not seen for eight years, and related to admiring

His return; trading project; goes to Europe



THE SEA-OTTER.

friends his thrilling stories of adventure. But he was not yet prepared to settle down. Indeed, ever since the sale by Cook's men of the sea-otter skins in Canton, which Ledyard witnessed, he had burned with enthusiasm to engage in the fur trade of the Northwest Coast. Here was the opportunity to gain both fame and fortune. If he could only get some American merchant to furnish a vessel, with the

necessary equipment, he might be first in the field and secure the cream of the trade. In trying to carry out his project, Ledyard interviewed the merchants of Boston, New York, and Philadelphia. It was hard to persuade these cautious men of business to undertake so dangerous a venture. Finally Robert Morris, then the greatest merchant of the United States, agreed to adopt the plan and enter into a partnership with Ledyard for carrying it out. We can imagine the enthusiasm with which our adventurer set about his preparations. These, however, did not proceed far. Either because no suitable vessel could be secured, or for some other reason, the arrangement with Morris came to naught.[1] Ledyard now determined to go to Europe in the hope of finding, in Spain or France, the mercantile support which he could not obtain in his native country. Before going he published (Hartford, 1783) a little book which gave to the world the first general account of Cook's voyage. By this means and by his personal activity among American merchants he no doubt aroused considerable interest in the Pacific Northwest; and therefore, in spite of his ill success, it was not long before

[1] A ship called the *Empress of China* was, it seems, engaged; but for some reason her destination was changed and she was sent to China direct in 1785. This vessel opened the Chinese trade with our eastern cities.

others were making similar plans for conducting a trade from Boston to the Northwest Coast and to China.

The *Columbia* and the *Lady Washington*

In 1787 several Boston merchants fitted out two small vessels, the *Columbia* and the *Lady Washington*, with cargoes of trinkets, bright-colored cloth, and blankets for the Indian trade. They left Boston on the 1st of October, under the command of John Kendrick and Robert Gray. The ships were separated on the voyage up the Pacific coast. The *Washington* traded with the natives, visiting Tillamook and other ports, and entered Nootka Sound on the 16th of September. There Captain Gray found two British ships and witnessed on September 20 the launching of the *Northwest America*, constructed by Lieutenant Meares, the first sea-going vessel built on the Northwest Coast.[1] Three days later Kendrick arrived in the *Columbia*, and the Americans prepared to spend the winter at Nootka Sound.

Trading cruise. The *Columbia* sails to China and to Boston

When spring came both vessels sailed out to trade along the coast and had a successful cruise. Mr. Haswell, one of the officers, tells us in his diary that they purchased two hundred sea-otter skins of one tribe in exchange for a chisel. We do not wonder when he

[1] These British ships were the *Felice* and *Iphigenia*. The latter, with the *Northwest America*, was detained by the Spaniards. All these vessels carried the flag of Portugal.

adds, "I was grieved to leave them so soon, as it appeared to be the best place for skins that we had seen." Aside from securing a good cargo, the Americans explored along Queen Charlotte's Island, and gained a large amount of information about the coast both north and south of Nootka. Toward the end of this summer all the furs thus far collected were taken on board the *Columbia*. Captain Gray then sailed in her to China. He sold his cargo, loaded with tea, and turning his prow westward, finally reached Boston (August, 1790) by way of the Cape of Good Hope. This was the first time that the flag of the young American Republic had been borne around the world.

Later voyage to the Northwest Coast

After unloading his tea, Gray was sent back to the Pacific, where he traded up and down the coast during the summer of 1791, much as he had done two years before. The following winter was spent in the harbor of Clayoquot. There he built a small vessel, the *Adventure*, and in spring resumed his trading excursions with the most important and unexpected result.

As Gray ran southward along the coast he discovered (May 7) Gray's Harbor, where he was attacked by the natives; and on the 11th of May (1792) entered the mouth of a great river in latitude 46° 10′. This he named "Columbia's River," in honor of the good ship which

THE MOUTH OF THE COLUMBIA.

first stemmed its mighty current. The *Columbia* remained in the river ten days, shifting her anchorage several times, and ascending the stream to a point "about thirty miles" above the bar. Gray "doubted not it was navigable upwards of 100" miles. Many Indians in their bark canoes were constantly about the vessel, eager for trade. Some of the ship's men filled the casks with water; others tarred and painted the ship; still others were engaged in making and repairing irons. It was a busy time, those May days of 1792, when the estuary of the Columbia first became the scene of commerce conducted by civilized man.

Discovery of the Columbia River, May 11, 1792

We can but marvel that this great discovery should have been left for the American trader, when the government expeditions of Great Britain and Spain had been cruising along those shores for many years. In 1775 the Spaniards had actually discovered the bay at the mouth of the Columbia; but while Heceta suspected the existence of a river, he failed to enter the stream itself. Thirteen years later Lieutenant Meares, the English trader, who figures so prominently in the Nootka Sound affair, sailed along the line of breakers just outside the bar. He named the indentation which he saw "Deception Bay"; and so far from discovering that it was in fact the estuary of a great river, Meares went out of his way to

Failure of Heceta, Meares, Cook, and Vancouver

declare "that no such river as St. Roc exists, as laid down on Spanish charts."

Captain Cook passed up the coast in 1778 without suspecting the presence of the river, and just two weeks before Gray made his famous discovery, Captain George Vancouver examined carefully the very opening through which the river pours its continental flood into the ocean. Vancouver noted simply "the appearance of an inlet, or small river, the land behind it not indicating it to be of any great extent; nor did it seem to be accessible for vessels of our burden." With this reflection, and the statement that he did not consider "this opening worthy of more attention," he continued his northward voyage. A few weeks later he received, at Puget Sound, the news of Gray's wonderful discovery.

Broughton's exploration

Vancouver sent Lieutenant Broughton to the Columbia in October, and through him explored it to Point Vancouver, about one hundred miles from the bar. He made light of Gray's exploit, trying to show that the trader had not entered the river proper, but only the inlet at its mouth. The world has been more generous than this distinguished British navigator. It honors the captain of the Boston trading ship as the real discoverer of the Columbia, and ranks his achievement as one of the noteworthy events in the history of the Pacific Northwest.

CHAPTER IV

EARLY EXPLORATIONS WESTWARD

The west-flowing river

Since the first planting of colonies along the Atlantic coast, the search for a strait had often taken the form of a search for a west-flowing river. At first it was supposed that North America was very narrow, and that the larger streams falling into the Atlantic must have their sources near others, flowing westward. The problem of a water way to the Pacific could be settled, therefore, by connecting the headwaters of an east and a west flowing stream. It was with this thought that King James required the first English colonists to explore the rivers of Virginia for their western connections.

Frenchmen reach and explore the Mississippi

But nature appeared to favor the French, rather than the English colonists, with an open highway across the continent. Within a few years after the founding of Quebec, Champlain had explored the Ottawa River and reached Lake Huron. Shortly afterward he sent his agent, Jean Nicolet, westward up the lakes to visit the Indian tribes in what is now Wisconsin. There the French learned of a great river

to the west, which they rejoiced to think would afford the long-sought passage to the South Sea. In 1673 Joliet and Father Marquette set out to explore this river. They launched their bark canoes at Green Bay, ascended the Fox River, and crossed over by a very short portage to the Wisconsin. The descent was easy, and in a few weeks they were floating along upon the broad current of the Mississippi. They hoped it might carry them to the South Sea, either at the Gulf of California or some more northerly point. By the time they reached the mouth of the Arkansas, however, the explorers were convinced that the Mississippi was an Atlantic river, and that its course was almost directly southward to the Gulf of Mexico. A few years later (1682) La Salle descended to its outlet, and took possession of the river and valley for the king of France.

Effect of the exploration

The exploration of the Mississippi gave an entirely new idea of the magnitude of North America. A stream greater than any of those east of the Alleghanies was flowing through the land for two thousand miles, and draining a vast territory whose very existence had been unknown. From the eastern mountains great tributaries, hundreds of miles in length, added their waters to its flood. Other large rivers entered from the west, and these doubtless had their headsprings far away in unknown regions,

lying toward the setting sun. The shore of the South Sea, so vividly present to the imagination in these early times, receded westward a thousand miles. Instead of reaching it by a stream interlocking with the James, the Potomac, or the Hudson, the problem now was to find a west-flowing river near the sources of the Red, the Arkansas, or the Missouri.

The Missouri and a western river

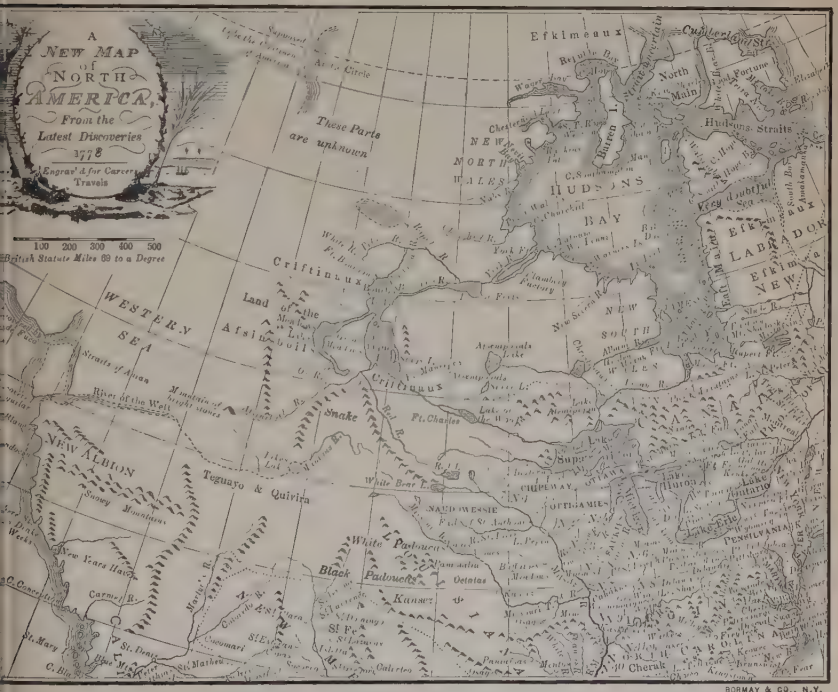
It was not long after the French gained control of the Mississippi valley, before the Missouri came to be looked upon as the great highway to the west. French traders and trappers ascended its turbid waters, and gathered information from the Indians about its upper streams. Men were always looking for a way to the Pacific, and even with no prompting from natives or others, would have constructed in imagination a river flowing from near the head of the Missouri to the South Sea. But there were several good reasons for believing in the existence of such a stream. In the first place, the Spaniards as early as 1603 claimed to have found a large river entering the Pacific near the southern boundary of the present state of Oregon; and for more than two hundred years they had known of a similar stream flowing to the Gulf of California. Their sources had never been seen, and it was reasonable to suppose that they could be reached from the upper Missouri. Besides,

there were traditions among the Indians about rivers flowing toward the sunset; and early in the eighteenth century, so the story runs, an old chief who lived on the Lower Mississippi, traveled for many moons in this direction until he reached the western ocean. French missionaries, from the time of Marquette, dreamed of carrying the Gospel to the tribes on the west-flowing river, and other Frenchmen hoped to establish a line of trading posts connecting the Mississippi with the South Sea. It was in pursuing this project that Verendrye, in 1743, discovered the Rocky Mountains in the country of the upper Yellowstone.

Jonathan Carver's travels

We now come to one of the most picturesque figures in early western exploration,—the American traveler, Captain Jonathan Carver. He was a Connecticut man, who had joined the Colonial army during the war against the French (1754–1763), and had performed good service. When the war closed, he decided, so he says, to undertake a journey to the far west with the hope of making discoveries useful to the government. On this expedition Carver was absent more than two years, from June, 1766, to October, 1768. He visited the Great Lakes and crossed over by the Fox and Wisconsin to the Mississippi. At the Falls of St. Anthony (St. Paul, Minnesota) he expected to prepare an expedition for the purpose of ascending the

Missouri and seeking for the River of the West. Being disappointed in these arrangements he went up the St. Peter River and wintered among the Sioux. From these Indians he probably learned some details concerning the geography



of the upper Missouri, and he may have heard from them the name "Oregon," or something like it, applied to the western river; at least we are indebted to Carver for this significant word. He prepared a map which shows his ideas con-

cerning the River of the West. We do not know how far it may have been based on information gained from the Indians, and how far it was imaginary; but however produced, it is one of the most interesting maps connected with the early history of the Pacific Northwest.

He goes to England

On returning from his travels, Carver soon went to London, where he spent the latter part of his life. For his knowledge of the interior of America, a large part of which he no doubt drew from earlier French travelers, he became an object of attention from prominent men connected with the British government. He tells us, for instance, of interviews which he had with the Lords of Trade and members of Parliament. It is a most interesting fact that the search for a western river became connected, at this point, through Carver, with the long familiar search for a strait.

Western river and Northeast Passage

We have already seen that the British government was at this time anxiously seeking the Northwest Passage. Hearne's discoveries (1769–1772) were creating a belief that the passage might be found by sailing northeastward from Bering's Strait. This was what led the government, in 1776, to send out Captain Cook to the Northwest Coast. But Carver tells us that an expedition had been planned two years earlier to accomplish the same object

in a different way. It was proposed to send a party of some sixty men, including sailors, shipbuilders and other mechanics, to Lake Pipin on the Mississippi. There they were to establish a fort or headquarters from which to begin the march overland along the Missouri. From the head waters of the Missouri they were to cross to the Oregon, and sail down that river "to the place where it is said to empty itself near the Straits of Anian." This party was to carry with them across the continent all the equipments necessary to build ships on the Pacific, establish a naval station near the mouth of the "River of the West," and begin the search for the Northeast Passage. Carver tells us that the plan was dropped on account of the Revolutionary War in America, which broke out at this time. Instead of the proposed overland expedition, the British government sent out Captain Cook, whose voyage not only added to our knowledge of North Pacific geography, but also opened up the fur trade with all the attendant results described in the last chapter. Among these, the most important was the discovery of the river Oregon, concerning which Carver certainly knew nothing definite.

Jefferson a western man

From this time the story of westward exploration centers very largely in one individual, the great American statesman, Thomas Jefferson.

Jefferson's home was in the western portion of what is now the state of Virginia, near the eastern foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains. From boyhood he had been familiar with the story of western adventure, and was the personal friend of many of the men who, like Daniel Boone, crossed the mountains to Kentucky, Tennessee, and Ohio. Kentucky after its settlement remained for twenty years a part of Virginia, and Jefferson, as a member of the state legislature, or as governor of the commonwealth, could not escape the necessity of interesting himself in everything relating to that section of the West.

Jefferson the philosopher

He was a man of broad sympathies and intensely active, inquisitive mind. Of all the great men of his time in America, not even excepting Franklin, Jefferson was undoubtedly the most widely informed. He loved science, literature, and the arts for their own sakes, and strove earnestly to gain at least a general view of every branch of knowledge. In this respect he resembled the great European thinkers of the eighteenth century. For all these reasons he is not inaptly called "the universal philosopher." Jefferson was a leading spirit in the American Philosophical Society, which aimed to gather new information in all departments of learning, but laid special stress upon everything pertaining

to the geography, and the animal and plant life, of the continent. The settled portions of North America were already known; but west of the mountains, and especially beyond the Mississippi, lay vast stretches of territory concerning which only vague rumors had thus far been received. The Great West was still a land of mystery and wonder, holding peculiar attractions for a man of Jefferson's imaginative mind. It is refreshing to read, in his letters written to friends living on the western waters, requests for all sorts of curiosities to be found in those regions, — the bones of the Mammoth or Mastodon, elk horns of unusual size, remarkable minerals and plants. He was always glad to pay the charges for transporting boxes of these things from the place of their discovery to his home at Monticello. In a letter to Philip Nolan, the notorious character who has been depicted as "the man without a country," Jefferson asked for a full account of the wild horses, of which large herds roamed over the Spanish country toward Santa Fé. This information, too, was for the American Philosophical Society.

His letter to Steptoe

In these letters of Jefferson to western men there appears, at last, evidence of a desire to know about the whole region west of the Mississippi and across to the Pacific Ocean. On the 26th of November, 1782, he wrote to a Mr.

Steptoe, asking not only for the "big bones," which seemed so hard to procure, but also for "descriptions of animals, vegetables, minerals, or other curious things." In addition, he would be glad to receive "notes as to the Indians' information of the country between the Mississippi and the South Sea."

First proposal of transcontinental journey

On the 4th of December, 1783, almost one year later, Jefferson wrote the now well-known letter to George Rogers Clark. After mentioning his desire to obtain the "bones, teeth, and tusks of the Mammoth," he says: "I find they have subscribed a very large sum of money in England for exploring the country from the Mississippi to California. they pretend it is only to promote knolege. I am afraid they have thoughts of colonizing into that quarter. some of us have been talking here in a feeble way of making the attempt to search that country. But I doubt whether we have enough of that kind of spirit to raise the money. How would you like to lead such a party? tho I am afraid the prospect is not worth asking the question."

Question of the route

This is the first proposal made in the United States for an overland journey to the Pacific. It could scarcely have appeared earlier, for at this time the treaty of peace with Great Britain, closing the Revolutionary War, was only three months old, and the last of the enemy's troops

were just leaving the country. The treaty gave us the Mississippi as the western boundary of the United States. The great region beyond the river belonged to Spain, whose colonies extended in a broken line from New Orleans, through Texas, to Mexico and Santa Fé. Along the Pacific, as we have seen, she had a few missions and presidios, reaching northward as far as San Francisco Bay. It is not at all unlikely, since he speaks of a British plan to reach California, that Jefferson wished George Rogers Clark to go to the Pacific by a southern route, from near the mouth of the Mississippi, but we cannot be certain. Three years later the far-seeing statesman had fixed upon the Missouri as the line of approach to the western sea, and he held to this idea until the transcontinental route was opened under his direction by Lewis and Clark.

Jefferson and Ledyard

At this point we meet once more with the adventurous Yankee, John Ledyard. In the preceding chapter we found him, after the return of Cook's expedition, trying to persuade some great merchant of the Atlantic cities to fit him out with a ship for the Northwest fur trade. Failing in this Ledyard went to France, where he hoped to meet with better fortune. Again he was almost, but not quite, successful. Jefferson was then living in Paris as Minister of the United States to the court

of France; and since Ledyard was always in need of friends, he was not long in making the statesman's acquaintance. We could easily infer, even if we did not have the testimony of both men to the fact, that the subjects of the Northwest fur trade and westward explorations were most interesting topics of conversation at their frequent private meetings and the dinner parties of mutual friends.

New plan to explore North America

Since Ledyard had failed in his trade project he was all the more eager for some exploring venture which might bring him what he called "honest fame." For this purpose the western portion of North America offered the greatest inducements. In his over enthusiastic manner he wrote: "I die with anxiety to be on the back of the America States after having either come from or penetrated to the Pacific Ocean. There is an extensive field for the acquirement of honest fame. A blush of generous regret sits on my cheek when I hear of any discovery there which I have had no part in. — The American Revolution invites to a thorough discovery of the continent. — Let a native explore its resources and boundaries. It is my wish to be the man." Jefferson wrote that Ledyard was "panting for some new enterprise," and he encouraged him in a plan to explore western North America, beginning at the Pacific coast. The traveler was "to go by land to Kamtchatka, cross in

some of the Russian vessels to Nootka Sound, fall down into the latitude of the Missouri, and penetrate to and through that to the United States."[1]

The Siberian journey; his return and death

Ledyard started out bravely toward the end of the year 1786. In order to reach St. Petersburg he traveled on foot across Sweden, Finland, and Lapland, through the blinding storms of an Arctic winter, nearly perishing from cold, hunger, and fatigue. From the Russian capital his journey was less difficult, and he arrived in northeastern Siberia before the next winter. There he waited, hoping to get a chance to sail to Nootka Sound in the spring for the purpose of beginning his great journey across the continent of America. He was used to disappointments; but that which now overtook him was the bitterest and most terrible of all. The Russian government refused, in spite of his passport, to allow him to go forward. He was arrested, placed in a closed vehicle, and "conveyed day and night, without ever stopping to rest, till they reached Poland, where he was set down and left to himself." Sick and almost heartbroken, he made his way to

[1] Before setting out on this journey he went to London and was invited to take passage on a trading ship about to visit the Northwest Coast. Ledyard was delighted. He got on board with his two great dogs, his Indian pipe and hatchet, and already felt the thrill of being under way, when the ship was arrested by the government and the voyage abandoned.

London, where he arrived in May, 1788. But soon recovering his spirits, in a few weeks he was eagerly planning another exploring scheme. This time he proposed to search for the sources of the Nile, having been engaged for that purpose by the African Association in London. He started, reached Egypt, and was already looking forward to a plunge into the depths of the Dark Continent, when he fell sick and died very suddenly in November, 1788. A few days earlier he had written an enthusiastic letter to his old friend Jefferson.

Jefferson's return to America

Jefferson was called home from Paris in 1790 to become Washington's Secretary of State. Others were by this time thinking of exploring the West, and Captain John Armstrong made an attempt to pass up the Missouri in the spring of 1790; but reports of wars among the Indians turned him back. In 1792 Jefferson supported a scheme of the French botanist, Michaux, to make a journey to the Pacific; but this also failed. Eight years later he was elected President of the United States, and then, at last, the opportunity came for carrying out his long-cherished project of western exploration.

CHAPTER V

ORIGIN OF THE LEWIS AND CLARK EXPEDITION

When Jefferson entered upon his office of President, March 4, 1801, the Mississippi was still the western boundary of the United States. All west of the river was supposed by Americans to belong to Spain, which had been in possession at New Orleans since 1763. As a matter of fact, however, the great Napoleon, who was then at the head of the French government, had recently forced Spain to give back Louisiana to France, but without publishing to the world the treaty of October, 1800, by which this was accomplished. When the Americans learned, a little later, of the change of ownership of this western territory, and the prospect that France would succeed Spain at the mouth of the Mississippi, great alarm was felt throughout the country. "Perhaps nothing since the Revolutionary War," wrote Jefferson, "has produced more uneasy sensations throughout the body of the nation."

Napoleon alarms the Americans

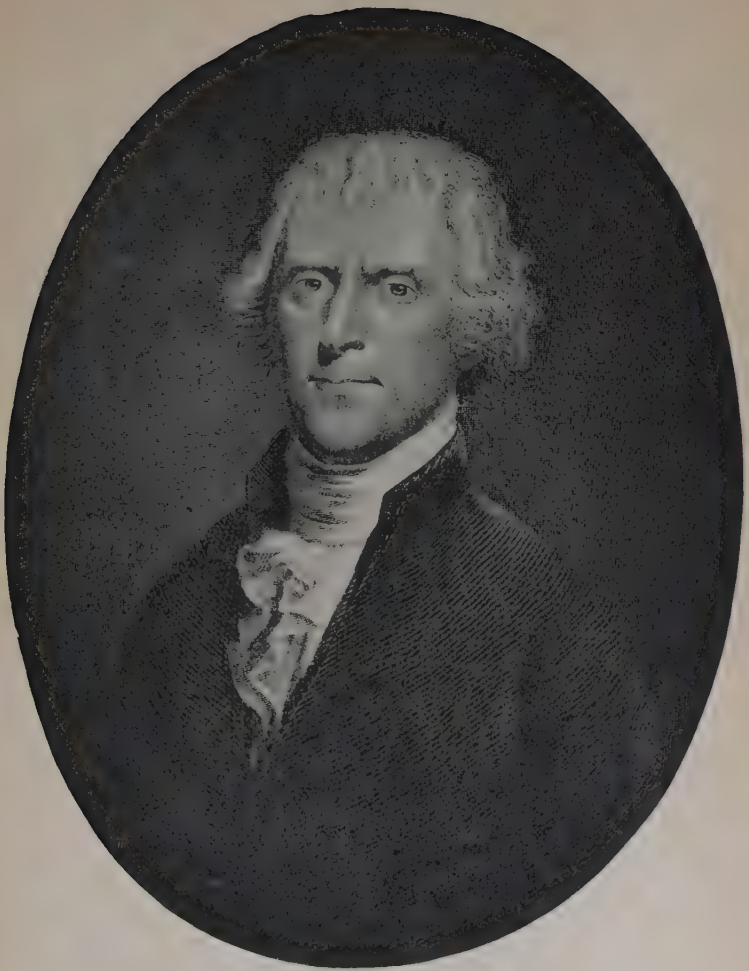
A glance at the condition of the West of that time will explain why this was so. The entire region beyond the Alleghanies was by

The western settlements

nature tributary to the Mississippi. It was a fertile land, containing rich valleys, beautiful plains, and far-stretching forests which once teemed with wild game. Daniel Boone called Kentucky "a second Paradise." He and other pioneers at first entered the region as hunters. Afterward they cut a road through the Shenandoah Valley and Cumberland Gap ("the Wilderness Road"), through which they brought their wagons, families, and cattle, to make new homes upon the western waters. The pioneers of Tennessee arrived at about the same time, just before the Revolutionary War, and occupied the high valleys along the head waters of the Tennessee River. From these beginnings settlement had spread rapidly, in spite of Indian wars and frontier hardships, until, in the year 1800, Kentucky had a white population of 180,000, and Tennessee 92,000. By that time Ohio had also been settled, partly by Revolutionary soldiers from New England, and already counted 45,000 people. A few settlers were scattered along the rivers of Alabama and Mississippi, and still others lived in the old dilapidated French villages of Illinois, Indiana, and Michigan. We will not be far wrong in placing the total white population on Mississippi waters in 1800 at 325,000.

Conditions of life in the West

The prosperity of all these people was absolutely in the hands of the power that con-



THOMAS JEFFERSON.

trolled the Mississippi. At that time there were no canals joining the eastern and western streams; railroads had never been heard of; and the steamboat, afterward such a wonderful aid in transporting goods and passengers up the rivers of the West, was yet to be invented. Manufactured goods, articles of little bulk and considerable value, were carried across the mountains from the Atlantic seaboard by pack train or wagon, to supply the frugal wants of the frontier settlers. Cattle from the great ranges of Kentucky and Tennessee were driven eastward to market; but all the other produce of farm, mill, and factory, the surplus wheat, corn, pork, flour, and lumber, were carried to the one invariable market at New Orleans. The means employed in transportation was the old-fashioned "ark," or flatboat, made of rough plank and guided by rudder or setting pole. Such craft were a feature of every farming community in the western states. They were built by the farmers themselves, and moored in convenient streams to await their cargoes. Then, when harvest was over and the free days of autumn arrived, the husbandman loaded on the annual surplus, and with his sons or hired men floated down to the distant Spanish city. There he sold his cargo, boat and all, to secure the money needed to clothe his family and buy the small supply

of homely comforts which they had learned to demand. The return was by keel boat up the river, on the back of a Spanish pony overland, or by ship around to the most convenient Atlantic seaport.

Dependence on the Mississippi

So long as Americans had the free use of the Mississippi, all was satisfactory. In theory this was one of our unquestioned rights; but the practical fact was different, for the Spaniards owned the land on both banks of the river at its mouth, and our people were dependent on them for a place to deposit the produce brought down until it could be transferred to ocean vessels. If they, or the French who were about to step into their places, should refuse to continue this right of deposit, or should charge a heavy toll for it, they could sap the very lifeblood of the American communities in the entire trans-Alleghany region.

Spaniards close the Mississippi

The Spaniards were supposed to be too weak to attempt this with any promise of success; but France had become the dread of Europe, and ranked as the greatest military power of the world. It is not strange that Americans should take alarm at the prospect of having her as a neighbor on the west, especially since this would mean French garrisons planted about New Orleans. The uneasiness of which Jefferson wrote was caused by the fear that France, when once in possession,

might undertake to oppress the Americans in order to establish her influence over the western people.[1] Just before the close of the year 1802 the news reached Washington that a Spanish official at New Orleans had actually denied to Americans the right of deposit, which was guaranteed by treaty. This action not only increased the alarm already widely felt, but aroused the West to a desire for war in which many eastern people shared.

Jefferson's plan to buy New Orleans and West Florida

Jefferson was by nature strongly averse to war, and would sometimes yield a great deal in order to preserve peace. In this case, however, his mind seems to have been made up. We must go to war rather than permit France to take and keep possession of the mouth of the Mississippi. But it would be best, he thought, to delay the armed conflict as long as possible, and meantime he would try to gain the control of the river for the United States by the arts of diplomacy, in the use of which he was a master hand. The plan was to frighten

[1] During the Colonial period France held all the territory drained by the Mississippi, and only gave up the region between the river and the Alleghanies to Great Britain (1763) because she was compelled to do so. After the United States came into control of it France began scheming to get it back. This was one of the objects of the Genet mission in 1793, and it occupied the French government at other times, as the Americans well knew. Spaniards and English also had an ambition to control the region west of the Alleghanies. One such British plan connects with the Nootka Sound controversy.

Napoleon with a threat that the United States would join Great Britain in a war against France, and thus induce him, as a condition of peace, to sell us the island and city of New Orleans, together with West Florida. This would give the United States both banks of the Mississippi at its mouth, and insure the control of the river. Jefferson had already instructed Robert R. Livingston, our minister to France, to undertake this purchase of territory from Napoleon; and when the war spirit ran high in Congress, during the winter of 1802–1803, he sent James Monroe to Paris as a special commissioner to assist in carrying out this plan. At the same time Congress took measures to place the country in as good condition as possible to bear the shock of a future war.

The special message of January 18, 1803

It was under these circumstances, when the country was excited over affairs in the West, and fearful of a collision with the overshadowing power of France; when the fate of the Mississippi appeared to be hanging in the balance, and might turn either way; that President Jefferson sent to Congress the now famous message of January 18, 1803, recommending an exploring expedition to the Pacific.

Its two divisions. The first part

This document contains two distinct parts which ought, however, to be read together. The first part deals with questions which apparently relate wholly to Indian affairs. But

the reader of the message can readily see that the President's chief purpose is to provide additional protection to the Mississippi River. He felt strongly, at this time, that our interests would not be safe till the United States had a large population in the West, and especially along the great river itself. The government must encourage the westward movement in every proper way, and thus "plant upon the Mississippi itself the means of its own safety." But especially must an effort be made to establish American settlements on the great stretches of unoccupied land immediately along the east bank. Since the Indian tribes owned most of this land, something must be done to induce them to part with it; and Jefferson believed that the best method was to continue selling them goods, including plows and other implements which had a tendency to make of the Indians an agricultural people. With the expansion of their corn fields, the growth of their herds and flocks, they would see the uselessness of retaining vast stretches of forest for hunting grounds, and would be glad to sell these to the government for money or needed supplies. That is why Jefferson dwells at such length upon the importance of maintaining government trading houses, where they already existed among Indian tribes, and urges Congress to consider carefully the question of establishing others.

The Mississippi River, and the question of how to defend it, lie back of this entire discussion.

The second part

When we come to the second part of the message other questions appear, but the argument for the protection of the Mississippi is still present. The power of the United States extended only to the river itself, the great region to the west being under the jurisdiction of Spain, which was about to hand over the country to France. Large and powerful native tribes hunted the buffalo upon the broad prairies which now are divided into numerous states, containing millions of inhabitants. The Indians, along the Missouri especially, were so closely connected with the Mississippi that, as the President saw, they could either help or harm us a great deal. He insisted that we ought to become better acquainted with these tribes. They were trading with British subjects whose headquarters were at Montreal in Canada. They might just as well be sending their beaver and other furs down the Missouri, and across the United States to New York or Baltimore. If they could be induced to trade with Americans, it would be to our advantage in every way. Those Indians would then be our friends instead of our enemies, and would serve as a protection to the Mississippi from the west.

A government expedition proposed

In this manner Jefferson led up to his great project of sending a government expedition up the Missouri. It was the opportunity to explore the West for which he had been waiting twenty years; yet his message has very little to say about exploration for its own sake, and a great deal about commercial treaties with the Missouri River Indians. This shows simply that Jefferson was a practical, tactful man, who knew how best to approach Congress on the subject of an appropriation for carrying out his plans. "An intelligent officer," he says, "with ten or twelve men fit for the enterprise and willing to undertake it, might explore the whole line, even to the Western Ocean, have conferences with the natives on the subject of commercial intercourse, get admission among them for our traders, as others are admitted, agree on a convenient deposit for an interchange of articles, and return with the information acquired in the course of two summers."

The Pacific Ocean its objective point

The phrase "even to the Western Ocean" shows clearly that Jefferson had in mind a genuine exploring expedition, such as he had planned several times during the preceding twenty years, but was never able to obtain. He proposed nothing less than the opening of a way across the continent to the Pacific Ocean, and a careful scientific examination of the country along the route.

The Louisiana Purchase a later event

When we remember that the message was written on the 18th of January, 1803, it becomes plain that the exploring expedition recommended by Jefferson had nothing whatever to do with the Louisiana Purchase. At that time he had just sent Monroe to France to assist Livingston in the plan to purchase New Orleans and West Florida. Neither Jefferson nor any one else had thus far hoped that we should own the whole of Louisiana. On the 30th of April, however, a treaty was made in Paris by which Napoleon transferred the entire region to the United States; and since the expedition already planned did not set out for more than a year, it has often been supposed that the purchase of Louisiana was the reason for sending it. This is a mistake. Congress had passed a bill appropriating twenty-five hundred dollars for the expedition, and President Jefferson had appointed its leader before it was known in the United States that Louisiana was ours.[1] We are now prepared to study the organization of the Lewis and Clark expedition, and to follow the intrepid American explorers in their thrilling journey across the continent.

[1] This paragraph would be unnecessary but for the fact that hundreds of books, now in print, contain the historical error above mentioned.

CHAPTER VI

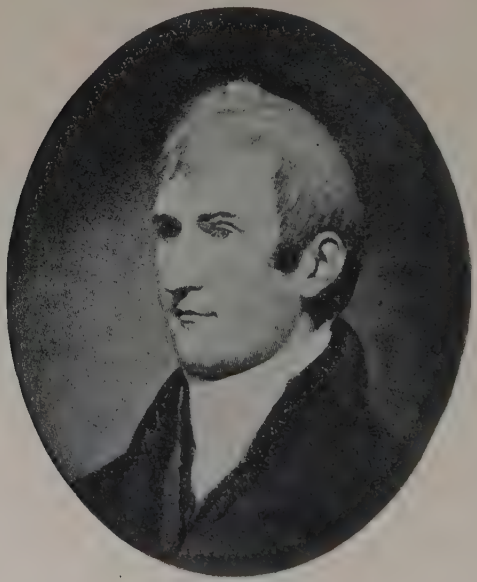
OPENING A HIGHWAY TO THE PACIFIC

Plan of organization

JEFFERSON'S plan for carrying out the exploring project was to appoint an army officer as leader, and let him select a few men from the military posts, wherever they could best be spared. In this way he would not only secure men trained to obey a commander, which was an important point, but would be enabled to fit out the expedition with very little expense; for the soldiers and officers would continue to draw their regular pay from the military department. His choice for the leadership fell upon Meriwether Lewis, a young Virginian, brought up in the neighborhood of Monticello, who had long been a favorite of Jefferson. He was of good family, was fairly well educated, and had many gifts both of mind and person. From boyhood Lewis had been fond of hunting, and had made himself an excellent woodsman. He was also an enthusiastic student of plants and animals, was inured to the hardships and discipline of camp life, and understood the character and customs of the American Indians. For a number of years he had been in the regu-

Captain Meriwether Lewis

lar army, but at this time held the office of private secretary to the President. His qualifications were admirable in so many respects, that in spite of some lack of scientific training, Jefferson "could have no hesitation in confiding

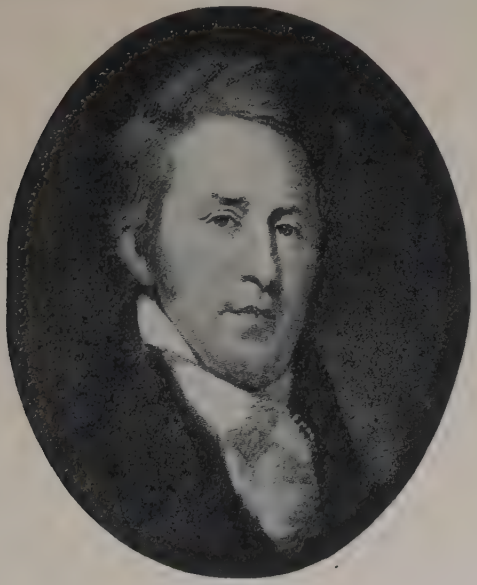


MERIWETHER LEWIS.

the enterprise to him." He knew Lewis to be "honest, disinterested, of sound understanding, and a fidelity to truth so scrupulous that whatever he should report would be as certain as if seen by ourselves." Besides, he was "steady in the maintenance of discipline," and would be "careful as a father of those committed in his charge."

William Clark

It was at Lewis's suggestion that the President appointed a second officer to share the command of the party, and the man to fill the post was also selected by the young captain. By a curious chance the individual chosen was



WILLIAM CLARK.

William Clark, younger brother of the celebrated western general, George Rogers Clark, to whom Jefferson had made the first proposal of an overland journey to the Pacific in 1783. Like Lewis, Clark was a man of military experience, having served under General Wayne ("Mad Anthony") in the campaign against the Ohio Indians. He had traveled widely in

the West, on several occasions even crossing the Mississippi. Clark was a few years older than Lewis, and differed from him in being less imaginative and enthusiastic; but in all respects he was a worthy companion, splendidly qualified to share the responsibility of the great enterprise. The two leaders were peculiarly fitted to work together harmoniously, and did so from the beginning to the end of the expedition. "Throughout all the trying experiences of the three years during which they were united, their respect and friendship for each other but deepened and strengthened — a record far from common among exploring parties."[1]

Instructions. The main object

Jefferson personally prepared the instructions which were to govern the leaders in their work. "The object of your mission," he wrote to Lewis, "is to explore the Missouri River and such principal streams of it as, by its course and communication with the waters of the Pacific Ocean, whether the Columbia, Oregon, Colorado, or some other river, may offer the most direct and practical water communication across the continent for the purpose of commerce."

Notes and records

They were to keep careful records day by day of the distances traveled and the points of

[1] Quoted from Reuben Gold Thwaites, "Rocky Mountain Exploration with Special Reference to Lewis and Clark," New York, 1904, p. 105.

interest along the route. All noteworthy geographical features, such as the mouths of tributary rivers, rapids, falls, and islands, were to be accurately located with respect to latitude and longitude, so that a correct map of the rivers followed and the portage between them could be drawn from the explorer's notes. The President suggested that several copies of these notes should be made in order to guard against their loss by accident; and also "that one of these copies be on the cuticular membranes of the paper-birch as being less liable to injury from damp than common paper." The officers were urged to induce as many of the men as possible to keep diaries, and several of them did so.

Dealing with Indians

Full instructions were given about dealing with the Indian tribes along the route, the explorers being required to "treat them in the most friendly and conciliatory manner which their own conduct will admit"; they were to impress upon the red men that the United States was not only their friend, but that she was a great and strong power able to afford them full protection. If possible, they should arrange to have a few influential chiefs visit Washington.

Other matters

The President made his instructions complete enough to cover every detail of the work proposed. Climate, soil, plants, animals, curious

geological remains, Indian legends — all these and other matters were to be kept in mind, and all possible information secured concerning them. "Should you reach the Pacific Ocean," he said, "inform yourself whether the furs of those parts may not be collected as advantageously at the head of the Missouri . . . as at Nootka Sound or any other point of that coast." If so, the trade not only of the Missouri and Columbia, but of the Northwest Coast as well, might be carried across the continent to the eastern seaboard of the United States. One of the most pleasing paragraphs in the instructions is that in which the kindly Jefferson says to Lewis, "We wish you to err on the side of your safety, and to bring back your party safe, even if it be with less information."

Preparations. Gathering the party

Captain Lewis spent several weeks in Philadelphia, under scientific instructors, and then set out for the West. He expected to get under way up the Missouri before the end of the year 1803. But delays at Pittsburg, where a drunken boat builder kept him waiting a month, and difficulties in navigating the Ohio during low water, wore away the summer. Clark joined him in Kentucky, and at several of the western posts soldiers were enlisted for the journey. Of these there were four sergeants and twenty-three privates, including nine Kentucky hunters. Two French interpreters, the

Indian wife of one of these (Sacajawea), and Clark's burly negro, York, completed the party. Sixteen additional soldiers and water men were engaged to accompany the expedition as far as the villages of Mandan Indians.[1]

The first winter

The winter of 1803–1804 was passed in camp at the mouth of the river Du Bois, opposite the Missouri. Captain Clark spent most of his time in drilling the men, building boats, and making other necessary arrangements about the establishment; while Lewis purchased supplies at St. Louis, and gathered information concerning the route from traders who thus early were familiar with the river as far as the Mandan villages. He frequently visited the American officers, and other persons of note in the little French hamlet, so soon to become an important American town. On the 9th of March he witnessed the ceremony of lowering the foreign flag and raising the emblem of our own country over the territory of upper Louisiana.

The start. La Charette

By the 14th of May the final touches had been given to the preparations, and the exploring party commenced the historic journey across the continent. Their supplies, instruments,

[1] The muster roll of the party, on leaving Fort Mandan, is given in Coues's "Lewis and Clark Expedition," New York, 1891, I, p. 253, note. Much interesting matter on the persons composing the party is contained in Eva Emery Dye's "Conquest," Chicago, 1902.

articles for trade and presents for the Indians, were carried in a flotilla consisting of three boats: one was a keel boat of twenty-two oars, with deck, sail, and breastworks; the other two were small craft, of six and seven oars respectively. Many of the leading citizens of St. Louis turned out to see them off. All recognized the importance of the enterprise, and delighted to honor the men who were braving untold dangers in order to open a highway to the shores of the Pacific. As the boats toiled up the swift-flowing Missouri they were often hailed from the banks by groups of French settlers, and sometimes by companies of Americans who were already beginning to emigrate to this newly opened region of the West. At St. Charles they made a halt of several days, and it was not till the 25th of May that the explorers passed La Charette, the home of Daniel Boone, and the last settlement on the Missouri. From this point their path lay wholly within the Indian country.

They meet up-river traders

On the 5th of June they "met a raft of two canoes joined together, in which two French traders were descending from eighty leagues up the Kansas River, where they had wintered and caught great quantities of beaver." Nine days later they encountered another party of traders coming down from the Platte. The 4th of July was celebrated by the firing of the

big gun, and apparently in other ways, for one of the journalists says that a man was snake-bitten.

Indian council; Council Bluff; death of Charles Floyd

On the east side of the Missouri, near the mouth of the Platte River, Lewis and Clark held councils with the Oto and Missouri Indians, giving the chiefs medals to hang about their necks, distributing flags, and leaving other tokens of American supremacy. The place of the gathering they named Council Bluff, noting that here was a good situation for a fort and trading house. The soil was good for brick, wood was convenient, and the air was "pure and healthy." One other incident of this part of the journey is deserving of notice. On the 20th of August, when the party was passing the site of the present Sioux City, Sergeant Charles Floyd died and was buried by his companions near the river. This is the only death that occurred on the entire journey.

Missouri River landscape. Buffalo

The country afforded little variety of landscape as day by day the exploring party moved along the course of the Missouri. Almost everywhere was the narrow fringe of forest, running down to the water's edge, while here and there a wood-covered island divided the current of the river. Parallel to the stream, and at varying distances from it, low ranges of hills separated the valley from the broad prairie beyond. Deep ravines, cutting across

the line of bluffs, opened natural highways from river to upland, and these were often worn down by the hoofs of the buffalo, which regularly followed such paths in search of water. Immense herds of these animals were seen, and many were slain by the hunters, adding not a little to the good cheer that enlivened the evening camp.

Arrival at the Mandan villages. Fort Mandan

About the end of October they reached the villages of the Mandan Indians, within the present boundaries of North Dakota. The sharp night frosts warning them of approaching winter, it was decided to establish quarters here. A site was chosen, cottonwood and elm logs brought from the river bottom, and a "fort" built. This consisted simply of two rows of rude blockhouses, placed in the form of a letter "V," with shed roofs rising from the inner sides. A row of strong posts, or palisades, completed the triangle. Such was Fort Mandan, where Lewis and Clark spent the long, severe, yet busy and not unpleasant winter of 1804–1805. Many things required to be done. There were notes to copy, reports to write, maps to draw; articles of interest found on the trip up the Missouri must be prepared for submission to the President; new boats were needed for the upward journey. These preparations occupied the leaders during a large part of the winter; but they took occasion, also, to visit all of the

The winter's work. British traders

surrounding Indian tribes, and to make the best arrangements possible concerning future trade with the Americans. British traders from the far north visited them at Mandan during the winter, and carried back to the posts of the Northwest Company and to Montreal the news that an American party was on its way to the Pacific.[1]

GREAT FALLS OF THE MISSOURI.

Up the Missouri again. The Yellowstone

In March the thaw came, and soon the Missouri was once more free of ice. On the 7th of April, after starting the keel boat down the river, the eager travelers proceeded on their way, rejoicing in the expectation of soon beholding the River of the West, and the great

[1] It is probable that this news stimulated the Northwest Company to hasten explorations, which its agents had already begun, on the west side of the Rockies.

ocean which was the object of their search. Before the month closed they passed the mouth of the Yellowstone, where the plains were "animated by vast herds of buffalo, deer, elk, and antelope," usually so tame that they allowed the hunter to come very near them, "and often followed him quietly for some distance." Beaver, too, were especially abundant here. From Indian travelers Lewis obtained a good account of the Yellowstone, and the country through which it flows. Near its confluence with the Missouri was "a situation highly eligible for a trading establishment."

The grizzly bear. Other terrors

One form of game found in this region was rather tamer than the explorers desired it to be, the grizzly bears, with which they had many thrilling encounters. On one occasion, when he had just discharged his rifle at a buffalo, Captain Lewis discovered one of these terrible animals rushing furiously toward him, with jaws distended, ready to tear him in pieces. There were no trees at hand, and the captain had barely time to reach the river bank and leap into the water, when he was able to frighten the beast off with his halberd. Other terrors were not wanting. A buffalo bull storming through camp after dark, a night fire and falling tree trunk, dangerous rapids, the upsetting of a boat — these are but hints to indicate the nature of the experiences with which the days

and nights were filled, as the explorers pushed on through this wild but interesting region, toward the sources of the great Missouri.

MULTONOMAH FALLS.

The interlocking rivers

After some difficulty at the Three Forks, they ascended what they called the Jefferson branch, and on the 12th of August Captain Lewis, with one division of the party, arrived at the headsprings of the river, high up near

the summit of the Rockies, in a spot "which had never yet been seen by civilized man." On the same day he crossed over to "a handsome bold creek of cold, clear water," *flowing westward.* The interlocking rivers, one flowing to the Atlantic, the other to the Pacific, had at last been found.

The Shoshones. Sacajawea

It was not long before he discovered a party of Shoshone Indians, from whom, after much delay, horses were procured for the journey to the navigable waters of the Columbia. At this point the Indian woman, Sacajawea, proved extremely helpful, for she belonged to the tribe of Shoshones and turned out to be the sister of a leading chief.

Character of the west slope of the Rockies

The explorers were now face to face with the most serious problem encountered during the journey. The western slope of the Rockies differed greatly from the eastern in being much more rugged and precipitous, with deep cañons through which the rivers rushed and swirled for great distances, until finally, on emerging from the mountains, they became navigable for boats. The travelers had been able to ascend the Missouri, to its source, with comparative ease; following along the river valley, which was usually free from serious obstructions, a plain and easy path, sloping so gradually that it appeared to be almost level. Now they must make their way over sharp ridges, through ter-

THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS.

As seen from the east near the heads of the Missouri.

rific mountain defiles, choked with fallen timber and masses of rock débris. Moreover, they had no satisfactory way of determining what route to take, or how far they would be obliged to travel before reaching navigable water. It was necessary to follow the advice of their Shoshone friends to some extent, but the leaders soon found that this could not be altogether relied upon.

Problem of the route

As a preparatory step, Captain Clark explored a way down Salmon River to its junction with a larger river to which he gave the name of his friend Lewis.[1] But he learned that this stream was unnavigable for many miles below the point reached, and that it would be impossible to follow its course through the cañon. He therefore returned, and the explorers decided to cross over to the river which flowed northward (Clark's Fork). This they would follow to a point below, where an Indian road, the Lolo Trail, was said to cross the Bitter Root Mountains to the mouth of the north branch of the Clearwater. For nearly a month they threaded dark forests, over steep hills, rocks, and fallen trees; made their way along dangerous cliffs; crossed raging torrents, whose icy

Clark discovers and names Lewis River

[1] It is now commonly called "Snake River," a name distasteful in itself, and possessing no significance. In this volume the original name, appropriately conferred by the explorer in honor of his friend and companion one hundred years ago, will be used throughout.

waters chilled both men and animals. Sometimes they encountered storms of sleet and snow, again the "weather was very hot and oppressive." Most of the men became sick, and all were much reduced in strength. Food

THE DALLES.
Mount Hood in the distance.

was so scanty that they were compelled to kill and eat some of the travel-worn horses.

Navigating the Columbia to the sea

At the place where the north fork of the Clearwater joins the river of that name, the party prepared five canoes, and on the morning of the 7th of October entered upon the last stage of their eventful journey. The difficulties of travel were nearly over; for the boats glided swiftly down the current, and ten days brought them to the confluence of the Lewis and Columbia. Here they were greeted by a proces-

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THE GORGE OF THE COLUMBIA.

sion of two hundred Indians, marching in their honor to the music of primitive drums. In two weeks they passed the Great Falls (Celilo), Long Narrows (Dalles), and Cascades, reaching on the 2d of November the tide-water section of the river. Then, on the 7th of November, they heard the breakers roar, and saw, spreading and rolling before them, the waves of the western ocean — "the object of our labors, the reward of all our anxieties."

Under the shadow of Mt. Hood

The purpose of the expedition had been achieved. A highway across the continent of North America was now an established fact, and all that remained to be done was to carry back the news of the great discovery. Jefferson had instructed Lewis to find, if possible, a ship on the Pacific by which some or all of the party might return to the United States with the journals of the expedition. But, while traders often entered the Columbia, as the natives testified, no vessel appeared during the winter of 1805–1806. All that could be done was to spend the rainy season on the Oregon coast, and take up the return march overland in the spring. At a place three miles above the mouth of the Netal (now called Lewis and Clark River), on the "first point of high land on its western bank," the explorers erected a low-roofed log building, to which, in honor of the neighboring tribe of Indians, they gave the

Establish winter quarters. Fort Clatsop

name of Fort Clatsop.[1] The location was by no means ideal, for the party was in need of food, and in this region game was not very plentiful. The winter at Fort Clatsop was therefore a time of real hardship, relieved by the hope of a speedy return to homes beyond the mountains. The shelter was completed on the last day of December; the next morning "a volley of small arms" was fired "to salute the new year." Some of the men were kept busy hunting the lean elk, on which the party was forced to subsist; others were sent to the seacoast—seven miles distant—to manufacture a supply of salt. At the fort the officers busied themselves with the notes and journals of the expedition. On the 11th of February Clark finished the great map of the overland route, so often printed, and a copy of a part of which is found on next page. A little trade with the Chinooks and Clatsops (mainly for dogs, fish, and wapato roots) formed the chief diversion during this tedious winter.

Completing the great map

[1] The Netal enters Meriwether's, now called Young's, Bay. The fort was located two hundred yards from the bank of the river. It was in the form of a square, 50 × 50 feet. Two cabins, one of three, the other of four, rooms, occupied two sides. Between them was the parade ground, the ends of which were closed by means of posts or palisades. In the June (1904) number of *Scribner's Magazine*, Mr. Reuben Gold Thwaites publishes for the first time the ground plan of Fort Clatsop. The drawing was found by him while searching recently among Clark's papers, "traced upon the rough elk-skin cover of his field book."

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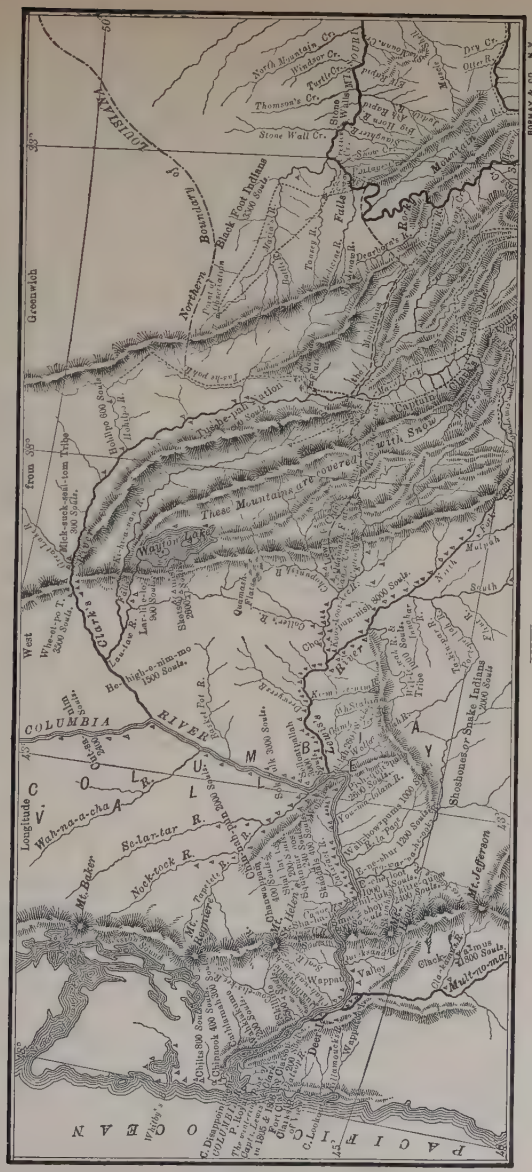

COLUMBIA RIVER
Mt. Jefferson
Mt. Hooker
Mt. Regnier
Mt. Adams
Mt. St. Helens
Mt. Hood
Mt. Vancouver
Mt. Rainier
Mt. Baker
Mt. Olympus
Cascade Mts.
Blue Mts.
Rocky Mts.
Wallawalla R.
Walla-walla
Wah-na-a-cha
Nock-nook R.
Sclar-tar R.
Multnomah
Clackamas
Wappatoo Valley
Tlamath Lake
Klamath R.
Shoshonees or Snake Indians
Northern Boundary
Black Foot Indians
Captured with Sacajawea
These Mountains are covered with Snow
Pacific Ocean
Greenwich
from
West
Longitude
Latitude
Stone Wall Cr.
Thomson's Cr.
Tuttle Cr.
Windsor Cr.
North Mountain Cr.
Dry Cr.
Otter R.
Pearl City R.
Tushe-tan-nadon
Mitch-sack-sail-com Tribe
Wee-ah-pa T.
Wah-kee-a-cum
Shash-ah-nim-mo
Qua-nah-ah-ha
Chah-mah-nah
Ke-mah-nah-mo
Ke-high-a-nim-mo
Wah-ha-na-pum
Wah-ha-na-pum
Wah-ha-na-pum

The return begun March 23, 1806

The days dragged painfully by till the 23d of March, when our travelers commenced the homeward journey. Before setting out they distributed written statements among the Indians, explaining who it was that had so mysteriously come to their country from the land of the rising sun. These the natives were instructed to show to any white men who should visit the river. The journey eastward was not without its difficulties. The tribes along the river demanded high prices for horses and dogs, and the stock of goods carried by the explorers was soon exhausted. But both Lewis and Clark were skilled in the use of common remedies for the diseases which prevailed among the Indians, and by selling their drugs at a high price they were able to buy the supplies which were indispensable to them. The snow still lay deep in the gulches when the party reached the western base of the Rocky Mountains, impeding their progress for many days; but in spite of all obstacles, they made the journey with complete success, reaching St. Louis on the 23d of September, just six months out from the mouth of the Columbia.[1]

Arrive at St. Louis September 23, 1806

[1] Captain Lewis went at once to Washington to make his report to President Jefferson. Soon afterward he was appointed governor of Missouri Territory, but died very suddenly and mysteriously, in 1809, at the early age of thirty-five.

Captain Clark was for many years the United States superintendent of Indian affairs for the West, with headquarters at St. Louis. He died in 1838.

The journals of the expedition, very much amended and abbreviated, were first published in 1814 under the editorship of Nicholas Biddle. Many editions, based upon this one, have appeared since that time, the most satisfactory being that by Dr. Elliott Coues, New York, 1891, 3 vols. A new edition, containing a literal transcript of the complete journals, and much matter relating to the expedition not hitherto published, is now being issued under the editorship of Reuben Gold Thwaites, LL.D.

CHAPTER VII

A RACE FOR THE COLUMBIA RIVER FUR TRADE

American rights and interests west of the Rockies

THE explorations of Lewis and Clark, together with Gray's discovery of the Columbia, gave the United States a good claim upon the country west of the Rockies, drained by this river and its branches. But in order to hold it permanently, as against other nations of the world, it would be necessary for Americans to take actual possession of the region. Here was a difficulty. The recently purchased territory of Louisiana had doubled the area of the United States, and would furnish homes for millions of families. Emigrants would find no need to cross the Rockies for many years to come.

The chances for a profitable fur trade

There was but one way in which Americans could make use of the newly explored territory, and that was by trading with its native peoples. Lewis and Clark found, along the Columbia and its tributaries, numerous tribes of Indians, living upon fish, game, and roots.[1] Most of

[1] Hundreds were seen drying salmon at various points along the river, and the Dalles was the great fish market of the Columbia.

them were wretchedly poor, lacking every comfort, and many of those things which civilized men regard as necessaries. Yet the streams were full of beaver, and if traders should once begin to frequent the up-river valleys, as they already did the inlets along the coast, these Indians would soon take to hunting furs in order to have something to exchange for the goods they all coveted. Had our people been prepared for it, a large business might have been built up in that region.

American fur trade. Lack of organization

But at the time of Lewis and Clark's return the Americans were not ready to take advantage of these opportunities. The fur trade as a business was as old as the American colonies. From Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay; from the Connecticut, Hudson, Potomac, James, and Savannah rivers; it had spread westward with great rapidity, always keeping in advance of the actual settlement. Long before the Revolutionary War the Indians on the western waters had learned to listen for the tinkling bells of the trader's pack train as it emerged from the passes of the Alleghany Mountains. Almost everywhere "the Indian trade pioneered the way for civilization."[1] It improved the trails, which afterward became roads; it planted its trading posts at important points along the

[1] Quoted from Frederick J. Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History."

rivers, or upon the Great Lakes, and these in many cases were growing into great towns.[1] This trade had, therefore, been of the utmost importance in American history; and in spite of the government trading houses, which had existed for a few years, it was still important. With the opening up of the Missouri by Lewis and Clark it promised to extend itself rapidly to the Rocky Mountains; but for making use of the country to the west of the Rockies our traders were at a disadvantage in not having a thorough organization, with a large capital and strong commercial support. These would be absolutely necessary in conducting operations at such distances, by means of ships upon the Pacific, and large trading houses in the western territory.

The British. Hudson's Bay and Northwest Fur companies

In the British section of North America conditions were different. There we find two great companies, each with a large capital and powerful organization, fitted to control the trade of vast wilderness areas. The first of these was the Hudson's Bay Company, whose forts near the mouths of the rivers flowing into Hudson Bay received each year about seventy-five thousand beaver skins, brought down from the far

[1] "The trading posts reached by these trails were on the sites of Indian villages . . .; and these trading posts . . . have grown into such cities as Albany, Pittsburg, Detroit, Chicago, St. Louis, Council Bluffs, and Kansas City." — TURNER, "Significance of the Frontier," etc.

interior in great fleets of canoes, manned by hundreds of Indians.[1] The second was the Northwest Company, with headquarters at Montreal. It was the successor of the French traders of Canada, and, although young (organized in 1787), had already gained control of most of the trade along the Great Lakes, the Assiniboin, Saskatchewan, and Athabasca rivers; while its agents were to be found on the Upper Mississippi and the Missouri as well.

The Northwest Company crosses the Rocky Mountains

By a series of wonderful explorations, Alexander Mackenzie, an officer of the Northwest Company, had even opened a way for the trade to the Arctic Ocean (along the Mackenzie River, explored by him in 1789) and across the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific.[2] In 1806, having

[1] The Hudson's Bay Company received a charter from Charles the Second in 1669. In 1742 a thousand Indians came to the mouth of Nelson River in six hundred canoes, bearing fifty thousand beaver skins; while during the same summer the fort on Churchill River received twenty thousand beaver and several thousand other furs. The natives carried back blankets, guns, powder, shot, hatchets, knives, tobacco, brandy, and paint. Prices of goods were very high. A pound of gunpowder cost four beaver skins, and a blanket twelve. The skins were sold at the rate of six shillings per pound. It is declared that some of the goods sold at a profit of two thousand per cent.

[2] Mackenzie crossed the Rockies from the head of Peace River in the spring of 1793. After incredible difficulties he found a river flowing westward, which he supposed to be the Columbia. (It was, in fact, the Fraser River.) This he descended for a number of days, when he left it, and followed an Indian trail to the coast. There he painted on a smooth rock in these words the story of his great achievement, "Alexander Mackenzie,

learned of Lewis and Clark's expedition, the company sent Simon Fraser to this western district. He built a fort high up on a river navigated by Mackenzie, believing, as the explorer did, that this was the Columbia. Two years later Fraser descended to its mouth and found out his mistake. It was then called Fraser River. The Northwest Company had now obtained a foothold among the tribes west of the Rockies, and were moving slowly, yet surely, toward the great river. A few years would see many log trading forts upon its upper streams, and none could doubt that the ambitious "Northwesters" hoped at last to control the entire trade of the Columbia valley.

Mackenzie's great trading project

Mackenzie himself had a plan by which a single company, formed by a union of the Northwest and Hudson's Bay companies, should gather the fur harvest of half of the continent. They were to have ships on both oceans to trade along the coasts, and carry away the furs collected at two great central stations located, the one at the mouth of Nelson River (on Hudson Bay), the other at the estuary of the Columbia. By establishing posts throughout the interior he expected this giant monopoly to control the trade from the parallel

from Canada, by Land, the twenty second of July, one thousand seven hundred and ninety three."

of 45° to the Arctic Ocean.[1] The reader may smile at Mackenzie's project, and set it down as the dream of an enthusiast; yet twenty years later events occurred in the history of the fur trade which, as we shall see, almost literally fulfilled these plans. Meantime, however, others aside from the Canadians became interested in the western fur trade, and in the race which now ensued an American, rather than a British, fort was planted at the mouth of the Columbia.

John Jacob Astor

In the city of New York, at that time not yet the metropolis of the country, John Jacob Astor ranked as a merchant prince. For twenty-five years his ships had sailed the high seas, visiting all the great markets of Europe, and his name was known and honored in every commercial center of the world. Mr. Astor early began to buy and sell furs, finding this one of the most profitable branches of trade. His cargoes were made up largely in Montreal, the headquarters of the Northwest Company, where beaver skins were received from hundreds of trading posts, planted upon lake and river

[1] Except that portion of the Pacific coast on which the Russians were established. Mackenzie desired a union of the two British companies partly on account of the increased financial strength that this would give, and partly because the Hudson's Bay Company had a charter while the Northwest Company had none. The Nelson River was the best and shortest route from the interior to the Atlantic, and the Columbia was "the line of communication from the Pacific pointed out by nature." (See Mackenzie's Voyages, London, 1801, pp. 407 ff.)

as far west as the Rocky Mountains. Being a shrewd and quick-witted man, Astor soon learned all the details of the business carried on by this company, not only at Montreal, but through the long stretches of wilderness as well.

Astor's trading project

When Lewis and Clark returned from their wonderful journey, with information about the route to the Pacific and the opportunities for trade along the Missouri and Columbia rivers, Mr. Astor at once planned a brilliant trading project, similar in many ways to that of Mackenzie. He believed it would be possible, with his large capital and tested business ability, to at least gain control of the trade over a broad belt of country stretching from the Great Lakes to the Pacific Ocean. The first point was to push westward to the Mississippi and Missouri. For this purpose he organized (1808) the American Fur Company, in which Astor himself was the principal stockholder. He next proposed to establish a central station, at the mouth of the Columbia, for the trade of the region lying beyond the Rocky Mountains, and build a line of trading posts extending along the route explored by Lewis and Clark from the Pacific Ocean to the Mississippi.[1] He

[1] Astor had already begun a trade along the Great Lakes, so that practically the great depot on the Pacific would be connected with his business office in New York.

planned to send from New York every fall one ship freighted with goods for the Indian trade, and supplies for all the posts west of the Rocky Mountains. On arriving in the Columbia, about February or March, she was to unload this portion of her cargo and sail along the coast to gather the sea otter and other furs which the natives had long been accustomed to sell to American shipowners. This cruise was to be extended as far north as Sitka, for the purpose of carrying supplies to the Russians in exchange for their furs.[1] Thereafter she was to return to the Columbia. Meantime, in May or June, the traders from the interior posts would have delivered at the central station all the furs secured during the preceding winter on the rivers flowing into the Columbia. These were then to be placed on board the vessel, which would sail to Canton during the following winter. The cargo of furs was to be exchanged for an equally valuable cargo of silks, tea, and other Chinese goods, with which the Astor ship was expected to return to New York after an absence of about two years.

[1] At Sitka (New Archangel) the Russian American Fur Company collected furs from the neighboring islands, the Alaskan coast, and the interior. But they had very poor facilities both for marketing their product and obtaining necessary supplies. They were glad of the opportunity to make arrangements with Mr. Astor by which their furs were to be carried to the Canton market and regular supplies brought to New Archangel.

He sends the *Tonquin* to the Columbia

Such was the plan worked out in all its details by Mr. Astor before any part of it was put into operation. In the summer of 1810 he fitted out his first ship, the *Tonquin*, for the voyage around Cape Horn. She was placed in charge of Captain Jonathan Thorn, and left New York under the convoy of the famous American warship *Constitution*. On board the *Tonquin* were several of the partners of the Pacific Fur Company, organized by Mr. Astor to carry out his project. Most of these were engaged in Canada, among the men belonging to the Northwest Company. The clerks, too, were nearly all Canadians.[1] The *Tonquin* left New York on the 6th of September, 1810, rounded Cape Horn in December, and two months later arrived at the Hawaiian Islands. The voyage thus far had been without serious accident, but marred by almost ceaseless quarreling between the captain and the Canadian partners. While a good disciplinarian, and doubtless a very successful commander on a ship of war, Captain Thorn was not well qualified to manage a group of independent Scotch and American fur traders.

Arrival at the Columbia; Astoria

When the ship arrived off the mouth of the Columbia, March 22, 1811, new difficulties

[1] For a delightful account of the way these Canadians went down to New York, by boat, to await the sailing of the *Tonquin*, see Franchere's Narrative, New York, 1854, pp. 23–25.

arose. The waves were running high, and the line of breakers across the entrance to the river struck terror to the hearts of inexperienced sailors. Yet the captain sent out men in the ship's boat to sound the channel, a proceeding in which seven of the little company lost their lives. Three days passed before the *Tonquin* crossed the bar and anchored safe in

ASTORIA.
As it was in 1813.

the river. Then the Astor party selected a site for their fort, and began the erection of the Pacific coast emporium of the fur trade, which was appropriately named Astoria. "Spring, usually so tardy in this latitude," says Franchere, "was already well advanced; the foliage was budding, and the earth was clothing itself with verdure. We imagined ourselves in the garden of Eden."

Fate of the *Tonquin*

On the 5th of June the *Tonquin* left the river on her northern cruise in search of furs.[1] From this voyage she never returned, nor did a single one of the fated men who sailed in her from Astoria live to tell the gruesome story of the *Tonquin's* destruction. That awful tale is known only from the report of a Gray's Harbor Indian, who was taken on board as an interpreter to the northern tribes, and who escaped death when the ship was blown to atoms, with several hundred natives on board, in the bay of Clayoquot. She had entered that harbor to trade; the Indians brought their furs, and for some time the deck was animated by the varied scenes of peaceful barter. Finally, a slight difficulty between the captain and a leading chief sent the visitors back to their boats in an angry state. Next day they returned, pretending friendship, and holding up their bundles of furs in token of a desire to trade. A number came on board at once; others followed, till the deck was crowded. At a given signal they drew their knives, till then concealed, and rushed upon the hapless crew, quickly killing all but five, who had been

[1] One of the partners, Mr. Alexander Mackay, was on board as chief trader. He was a former Northwest Company man, and had been the companion of Mackenzie on his famous journey to the Pacific in 1793. He was a man of ability, very popular among his associates, and his death in the *Tonquin* disaster was deeply lamented.

ordered into the rigging to unfurl the sails. These managed to reach the cabin, where the firearms were kept, and soon succeeded in clearing the ship. Four of them, remaining unhurt, tried to escape by boat; but when they reached the shore all were captured and put to death with every refinement of torture. The fifth man was badly wounded and preferred to remain on board. Next day the Indians returned, apparently intending to loot the vessel; but when several hundred had clambered to the deck, others still remaining about her in canoes, a terrific explosion took place, and the ship with all on board leaped into the air, a mass of flaming ruin. Perhaps it was the work of the man on board, possibly the Indians themselves ignited the powder in the magazine; at all events they had suffered such retribution for the cruel massacre of the *Tonquin's* crew as the northern tribesmen could not soon forget.

The overland party. Wilson Price Hunt

About the time of the *Tonquin's* arrival on the Pacific coast another detachment of Astor's men was preparing to cross the continent by following the trail of Lewis and Clark. This company was under the direction of Mr. Wilson Price Hunt of New Jersey, an American partner, to whom Astor had confided the chief management of the Pacific department of the fur trade. He collected most of his men in Canada, at Montreal and Mackinac, carrying

them to St. Louis in the fall of 1810 in boats, by way of the Fox and Wisconsin rivers, and the Mississippi. They spent the winter in a camp near the frontier of settlement on the Missouri, and in March began the ascent of the river.[1] At the Aricara villages (near the present northern boundary of South Dakota) they learned that the Blackfoot Indians were hostile, and therefore decided to leave the river, making their way overland with horses in a southwesterly direction, to the Big Horn and Wind River mountains. They crossed these ranges and entered the Green River valley. Passing over the divide to Lewis River, they then decided to abandon their horses and take to canoes. This was an unfortunate error, for the stream soon, contrary to appearances, proved

[1] Bradbury, an English naturalist, to whose "Travels in America" we owe the preservation of many of the incidents of the trip as far as the Aricara villages, tells us (p. 16): "On leaving Charette, Mr. Hunt pointed out to me an old man standing on the bank, who he informed me was Daniel Boone, the discoverer of Kentucky. As I had a letter of introduction to him, from his nephew, Colonel Grant, I went ashore to speak to him. . . . I remained for some time in conversation with him. He informed me that he was eighty-four years of age; that he had spent a considerable portion of his time alone in the backwoods, and had lately returned from his spring hunt with nearly sixty beaver skins." Irving, after reading this statement of Bradbury, suggested that the veteran woodsman probably felt a "throb of the old pioneer spirit, impelling him to shoulder his rifle and join the adventurous band." Though he failed to do so in person, his children crossed the Rockies, and we meet his honored name in both Oregon and California.

itself a true mountain torrent, threatening destruction to both men and boats. They therefore left it (at the Cauldron Linn) and set out on foot, after breaking the company into smaller parties to make it easier to find game. The sufferings of these men, in their weary wanderings over the Lewis River desert, are more easily imagined than described, although Mr. Irving, in his classic history of the Astoria enterprise, has succeeded in giving us some very vivid pictures. Hunt, with a section of the party, reached the Grand Ronde valley at the close of the year, and on the 15th of February arrived at Astoria. Some had already reached the fort; others straggled in from time to time, till nearly all were safe.

Ship *Beaver* arrives May 10, 1812

Soon after this overland party reached the lower Columbia Mr. Astor's ship, the *Beaver*, sent from New York in the fall of 1811, anchored (May 10, 1812) in the Columbia River with a cargo similar in all respects to that carried by the *Tonquin* the year before. The Astorians were greatly rejoiced. At last they had abundant supplies, new reënforcements of men, and every encouragement to carry the trade far up the rivers toward the sources of the Columbia. It began to look as if Astor's brilliant project might be grandly successful after all, despite the calamities which attended its beginnings.

The Northwesters lose the race. David Thompson

In the preceding year, before the fort had been completed at the mouth of the river, a party of men prepared to ascend the Columbia for exploration and trade; but just as they were setting out (July 15) a canoe floating the British flag drew in to the shore at Astoria, greatly to the astonishment of the Americans. A gentleman stepped ashore, and introduced himself as Mr. David Thompson, geographer of the Northwest Company. He said that he had expected to reach the mouth of the river during the preceding fall, and had actually wintered west of the Rockies, but that owing to the desertion of some of his men it was impossible to carry out his plans. The Astorians believed it was his intention to plant a fort for his company near the spot where their own establishment was rising, and in this they were doubtless correct. We now know, from Thompson's journal and other sources, that this indomitable British "pathfinder" had been on the Pacific slope several times prior to 1811. In the year 1807 (June 22) he reached a tributary of the Columbia by crossing Howse Pass in the Rockies, and wrote in his diary, "May God in his mercy give me to see where its waters flow into the ocean and return in safety."[1] In 1809

[1] The late Dr. Elliott Coues made a study of Thompson's journals in their manuscript form, and published generous quotations from them in connection with the journals of Alexander

he founded a Northwest Company fort at Lake Pend d'Oreille, and another in the Flathead country, on Clark's Fork. A still earlier establishment was that on the Kootenai, and now there was also one on the Spokane River. The Americans saw at once that here was a formidable rival for the up-river trade; but they knew their advantage as the occupants of the lower Columbia, and determined if possible to drive their Montreal competitors across the Rockies.

Fort Okanogan founded, 1811

The delayed party, under David Stuart, one of Astor's partners, now set out up the river, accompanied as far as the Cascades by Thompson on his return. When Stuart's party reached the place where the Columbia and Lewis rivers meet they found a pole stuck in the ground, and tightly bound around it a sheet of paper containing the proclamation: "Know hereby that this country is claimed by Great Britain as part of its territories, that the N.W. Company of Merchants from Canada, finding the Factory for this people inconvenient for them, do hereby intend to erect a factory in this place for the convenience of the country around. D. Thompson." Notwithstanding this announcement, or possibly because of it, Stuart passed right on up the north branch

Henry. This gives us the valuable "Henry-Thompson Journals," 3 vols., New York, 1897.

to the Okanogan River, where he established the first up-river fort for the Astor Company, and carried on a successful winter's trade.[1]

Expansion of trade in 1812

When the *Beaver* arrived in 1812, with men and supplies, the Astorians decided on a great forward movement to the interior. They proposed to go into the neighborhood of every Northwest post and begin a rival establishment. Thus they planned a fort on the Spokane, with branch trading houses on the Flathead (Clark's Fork) and Kootenai rivers, and another in the She Whaps region. A third venture was to be made on the Lewis River, while the trade at Okanogan was to be continued.[2] The Spokane project was in charge of Mr. Clark, David Stuart went back to Okanogan, and Mr. Donald M'Kenzie was sent up Lewis River. Both Clark and Stuart, with their clerks and assistants at the branch stations, succeeded admirably in the trade of this second winter.

[1] Alexander Ross, one of the clerks, who spent most of the winter alone at Okanogan, while Stuart was exploring far to the north in the She Whaps country, tells us in his book, "The Fur Hunters of the Far West," that he bought fifteen hundred beaver, worth in Canton twenty-five hundred pounds, for goods worth, not to exceed, thirty-five pounds. This he calls a "specimen of our trade among the Indians."

[2] At the same time Mr. Robert Stuart was sent east with letters for Mr. Astor. His party became bewildered in the upper Lewis River country, and were forced to winter on the plains, reaching St. Louis April 30, 1813, after being out nearly a year from Astoria.

M'Kenzie did nothing on the Lewis, and by the middle of January was back at Astoria, with an alarming story which foreshadowed coming events.

War news crosses the Rockies

While visiting Spokane House about the close of the year 1812, so M'Kenzie told the people at Astoria, Mr. John George M'Tavish, partner of the Northwest Company, had arrived fresh from Montreal, with news that war had

FORT OKANOGAN.

broken out between the United States and Great Britain, and that the company was expecting an English warship to enter the Pacific and capture Astoria. At this time the fort was in charge of Donald M'Dougal, a Canadian like M'Kenzie, Hunt having sailed away the preceding summer in the *Beaver*, and being still

absent. These two men weakly determined to abandon the Columbia the following summer and cross the mountains; but the other partners when they came down with their furs in June (1813) vetoed this plan, insisting on remaining another winter if possible. M'Tavish descended the river with his men, spent much time about Astoria, and received needed supplies from the Americans, while he waited for the ship, which, as he declared, was daily expected.

Movements of Mr. Hunt

Mr. Hunt sailed away in the *Beaver* on the 4th of August, 1812. He ran to Sitka, made a successful trade with the Russians, and then proceeded to the islands of St. Peter and St. Paul, where he received eighty thousand sealskins. By this time it was winter; the vessel was much damaged, and all haste had to be made to get the valuable cargo to Canton. The *Beaver*, therefore, did not stop at the Columbia, but carried Hunt to Hawaii and continued on to China. Here the captain (Sowles) obtained news of the war, which sent him into hiding with his vessel till it was over. Hunt finally learned of the war in Hawaii and came to the Columbia in an American ship, the *Albatross*, reaching Astoria August 4, 1813, after an absence of exactly one year. He learned that the partners were resolved to abandon the river, and while he opposed, he

could not change the resolution. Still, hoping to save something, he sailed again in the *Albatross* to seek a vessel which might be available for the purpose of carrying away the goods and furs.

Astoria sold, October 16, 1813; taken by the *Raccoon* December 12 (or 13), 1813

At last, on the 16th of October, influenced by their fears if not by selfish motives, the partners sold Astoria and its belongings, with all furs, supplies, and other property at the interior stations as well, to the Northwest Company. One incident remains, and the story of Astoria is finished. "On the morning of the 30th" [November], says Franchere, "we saw a large vessel standing in under Cape Disappointment; . . . she was the British sloop-of-war, *Raccoon*, of twenty-six guns, commanded by Captain Black," . . . The long-looked-for British ship had come, and on the 12th of December (Henry says the 13th) the American flag was hauled down at Astoria to make place for the Union Jack. The station itself was rechristened Fort George. More than two months later (February 28, 1814) Mr. Hunt appeared once more, in the brig *Pedlar*, purchased by him for the purpose of carrying away Astor's property. He was too late, and sailed away again, first to the north, then down the coast to California and Mexico.[1]

[1] Most of the Canadian partners of Mr. Astor accepted positions with the Northwest Company, as did also many of the clerks and laborers. A few, including Mr. Gabriel Franchere, went back

to Canada overland in the spring of 1814, with the Northwest Company's express. Franchere's "Narrative," and two similar books, also by clerks of the Astor Company, A. Ross's "Fur Hunters of the Far West" and Ross Cox's "Adventures on the Columbia," are the principal sources for the history of the Astor enterprise. All of these have long been out of print. The "Henry-Thompson Journals," recently published, throw additional light on some phases of the history, and Irving's "Astoria" contains some matter taken from manuscript sources not now accessible.

CHAPTER VIII

THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY

When Mr. Hunt bade farewell to the Columbia (April 2, 1814), he left the British rivals in full control not only of the fort at the mouth of the river, but of all the avenues of trade between the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific, from California to Alaska. A few days later their first supply ship, the *Isaac Todd*, entered the river with a cargo containing everything necessary for the trade of the entire department. She also brought additional men, and these added to the list of Astorians already engaged, gave the Northwest Company a force sufficient to occupy the country at least as fully as Astor had done. They, however, made no important change in the trade for several years, till Donald M'Kenzie established the Walla Walla Fort (1818), and began to send trapping parties along Lewis River. This greatly extended the area covered, and increased the profits in a marked degree.

Changes on the Columbia

In 1821 a noteworthy change occurred in the fur trade of the British dominions. The Hudson's Bay and Northwest companies, whose

Union of the British fur companies, 1821

agents had long been destroying each other in their bitter contest for the possession of the northern forests, were now united under the name of the Hudson's Bay Company.[1] The dream of Alexander Mackenzie had been realized. From Montreal to Fort George, from St. James, near the head of Fraser River, to the Arctic Ocean and Hudson Bay, the wilderness

FORT WALLA WALLA.

traffic was at last organized under a single management, and carried on absolutely without competition except where the British came in contact with Americans or Russians. York Factory on Hudson Bay was the eastern emporium, and the residence of the company's

[1] In 1816 actual war broke out in the Red River valley, where Lord Selkirk had established a colony for the Hudson's Bay Company, across the path of the Northwesters. The union was brought about by the interference of government officials.

governor, Sir George Simpson. Fort George, at the mouth of the Columbia, was to be the western emporium.

In 1824 Dr. John McLoughlin arrived on the Columbia to take charge of the western department. One of his first steps was to abandon Fort George and to establish new headquarters at Point Vancouver.[1] Here was an ideal location for a trading center. The Willamette, entering the Columbia a short distance below, had its sources nearly two hundred miles to the south; the Cowlitz opened an avenue for trade toward Puget Sound; while for the Columbia itself, breaking through the Cascades a few miles above Vancouver, the site was the best that could be found. On a fine prairie about three quarters of a mile from the river, McLoughlin built the first Fort Vancouver, and occupied it in 1825. Four years later another establishment was built on the low

Dr. McLoughlin builds Fort Vancouver, 1824–1825

DR. JOHN MCLOUGHLIN, 1824.

[1] The point reached and so named by Broughton in October, 1792.

ground near the river bank. It was simply a stockade made of posts about twenty feet in length, inclosing a rectangular space thirty-seven rods long by eighteen rods in width, which contained all the principal buildings, including Dr. McLoughlin's residence. The servants of the company, with their Indian families

and friends, lived just outside, where in course of time a considerable village grew up. Such was the famous Fort Vancouver, round which clusters so much of the romance, as well as the more sober history, of early Oregon.[1] Dr.

[1] A fascinating picture of life at this western emporium of the fur trade is given by Mrs. Eva Emery Dye in her "McLoughlin and Old Oregon."

McLoughlin remained in charge of the establishment for twenty-two years, managing the company's business with rare success; and by his firm control over the Indians of the entire Oregon country, his kindness and hospitality to American traders, missionaries, adventurers and colonists, richly deserving the title, "Father of Oregon," bestowed upon him by the pioneers.

The fur trade at Vancouver

Vancouver was the clearing house for all the business west of the Rocky Mountains. Here the annual ships from London landed supplies and merchandise, which were placed in warehouses to await the departure of the boat brigades for the interior; here was the great fur house, where the peltries were brought together from scores of smaller forts and trading camps, scattered through a wilderness empire of half a million square miles. They came from St. James, Langley, and Kamloops in the far northwest; from Umpqua in the south; from Walla Walla, Colville, Spokane, Okanogan, and many other places in the upper portions of the great valley. Hundreds of trappers followed the water courses through the gloomy forests and into the most dangerous fastnesses of the mountains, in order to glean the annual beaver crop for delivery to these substations. We do not know precisely what the total business amounted to; but in 1828 a visitor to Vancouver (Jedediah Smith) learned that McLoughlin

had received during the year thirty thousand beaver skins, worth two hundred and fifty thousand dollars, besides a large quantity of other furs.

Agriculture and other business

Aside from the fur trade, which was the principal business, Vancouver was also the center of other activities. By 1828 a fine farm had

FORT VANCOUVER.

been opened on the prairie about the fort, and fields of wheat, oats, corn, peas, and barley flourished in the rich soil of this favored locality. As the years passed, more and more land was brought under cultivation, until the farm aggregated several thousand acres, "fenced into beautiful corn fields, vegetable fields, orchards, gardens, and pasture fields, . . . interspersed with dairy houses, shepherds' and herdsmen's

cottages."[1] In 1814 the *Isaac Todd* brought to the Columbia from California four head of Spanish cattle; the Astor people already had a few hogs, obtained from the Hawaiian Islands, and also several goats. These were the beginnings of the live stock interest of the Northwest. In 1828 the Vancouver pastures fed about two hundred cattle, fourteen goats, and fifty horses; while ranging the surrounding woodlands were about three hundred swine. The numbers of all kinds of animals increased with surprising rapidity. At first it had been the intention merely to raise grain and vegetables for the use of the establishment itself; but in course of time a large amount of wheat was sold to the Russians, and to American whalers in need of supplies. There was a flour mill at the fort, and on a neighboring stream a large sawmill, which not only produced lumber for home use, but also an occasional cargo for shipment to the Hawaiian Islands. The fort had its mechanics, representing all the ordinary trades, — smiths, carpenters, tinners, coopers, and even a baker. Several coasting vessels had been built by the carpenters prior to 1828.

Although business was the first consideration at Vancouver, and Dr. McLoughlin tolerated

[1] Quoted from Dunn, "The Oregon Territory and the British North American Fur Trade," Philadelphia, 1845, p. 107.

Social life at Vancouver

no idlers, yet, on the whole, life was pleasant there. The officers were nearly all well-educated gentlemen, who enjoyed good living, books, and agreeable company. Their dining hall at Vancouver was not merely a place where the tables were supplied with good food, but the scene of bright, intelligent conversation, conducted with perfect propriety, and pleasing to the most refined guests. The wives of the officers were usually half-caste women, yet in many cases they are said to have been excellent housekeepers and good mothers. They and their children did not eat with the men, but had tables in a separate hall. In other respects home life was much as it is in ordinary communities. The children spent most of the summer season out of doors, engaging in all manner of sports, and gaining special skill in horsemanship. In the winter a school was often maintained at the fort.[1] Religious services were conducted on the Sabbath, either by McLoughlin himself or by some visiting missionary or priest. The village had its balls, regattas, and other amusements, rendering it a place of much gayety, especially about June, when the brigades of boats arrived with the up-river traders, and

[1] John Ball, a New England man who came with Wyeth in 1832, taught the first school at Vancouver in the winter of 1832–1833. He raised a crop of wheat in the Willamette valley in the summer of 1833.

their crews of jovial, picturesque French voyageurs.

The monopoly methods of the Hudson's Bay Company

Fort Vancouver dominated the fur trade of Oregon almost as completely as if the country had actually been the private property of the Hudson's Bay Company. When American traders began to enter the Columbia valley, they soon found themselves at the mercy of this great monopoly which controlled the Indian tribes, possessed unlimited capital, and could afford to raise the price of beaver skins to ten times their ordinary value in order to drive out a competitor. While McLoughlin treated all strangers well and even generously at Fort Vancouver, he permitted no interference with the trade, which his strong position in the country enabled him to control. We must now inquire by what right these British subjects had come into possession of the Pacific Northwest, and how their presence affected the rights and interests already secured in this country by the people of the United States.

CHAPTER IX

THE OREGON QUESTION

How the Oregon question arose, 1817

THE war that ruined Astor's trading project was closed by the treaty of Ghent in December, 1814. The governments of Great Britain and the United States agreed that "All territory, places, and possessions whatsoever, taken by either party from the other during the war, . . . [should] be restored without delay. . . ." Mr. Astor seems to have thought that since his fort on the Columbia had been taken possession of by a British warship, the Northwest Company ought now to give it up, together with the surrounding country. He was not yet prepared to abandon an enterprise which had so deeply excited his interest, and he urged the United States government to secure the restoration of Astoria. In July, 1815, six months after the close of the war, the American Secretary of State gave notice to the British government that the Columbia would be reoccupied under the treaty; and two years later (September, 1817) our government ordered Captain Biddle (ship *Ontario*) to go to Astoria and "assert the claim of the United States to the [Oregon] country in

a friendly and peaceable manner. . . ." When the British minister at Washington, Mr. Bagot, learned of this last act, he entered a protest, declaring that Astoria was not one of the "places and possessions" referred to in the treaty, since the fort had been purchased by British subjects before the *Raccoon* entered the river. Nor was the Columbia valley "territory . . . taken . . . during the war," but a region "early taken possession of in his Majesty's name, and . . . considered as forming part of his Majesty's dominions."[1] Here was a sharp conflict of claims between the United States and Great Britain, which required twenty-nine years to settle, and is known in history as the Oregon question.

Formal restoration of the country, October 6, 1818

The first point to be agreed upon was as to which nation had the right to occupy the country at the time, setting aside the greater question of the final right of ownership. Here, certainly, the Americans had the advantage; for although Broughton may have taken formal possession in October, 1792, nothing had been done by the British government or people between that date and the year 1811 to make good their claim to the lower Columbia. On the other hand, the American trader, Gray, had

[1] It was claimed that Lieutenant Broughton took formal possession of the Columbia country when he entered the river in October, 1792.

shown Broughton the way into the river; Lewis and Clark had explored from its fountains to the sea; and Astor had taken and held possession till the events of the war forced him to retire. Whatever rights Great Britain may have gained as a result of explorations north of the Columbia, the planting of forts on tributaries of this river, or the mapping of the coast north and south of the estuary, the plain fact remained that Americans had been in possession of the territory at the mouth of the river when the war came, and therefore they ought to be in possession after its close. The British government admitted the force of these arguments, and on the 6th of October, 1818, their agents at Fort George allowed Mr. J. B. Prevost to run up the American flag.[1] This was the formal restoration of the territory to the United States, and meant that Americans were now at liberty to occupy it if they chose to do so.

First treaty of joint occupation, October 20, 1818

Two weeks later, October 20, 1818, diplomatic representatives of the two countries

[1] Prevost had been appointed joint commissioner with Biddle, and sailed with him on the *Ontario* to Valparaiso. Thence Biddle proceeded to the Columbia and took formal possession of the country, Aug. 9, 1818, though no British officer there had instructions to hand over the fort. Meantime, however, Prevost learned that such instructions had been issued, and, being invited by a British naval officer to accompany him northward, he sailed to the Columbia and received possession.

concluded a treaty in which the Oregon question was mentioned. At that time there was no dividing line between the territories of Great Britain and the United States west of the Lake of the Woods, and it was agreed to take the 49th parallel as the boundary from this point to the crest of the Rocky Mountains. The British diplomats wished to establish a boundary west of the Rockies as well, whereupon the Americans offered to extend the line of 49° to the Pacific Ocean. This the other party declined, thinking that it would not give Great Britain all the territory she could reasonably claim, and indicating that they thought the Columbia River should form the dividing line from the point where the 49th parallel crossed its easternmost branch to the sea. The American government was not willing at this time to press its claim, and so we accepted a provision for the "joint occupation" of the Oregon country for a term of ten years. This meant simply that Englishmen and Americans had an equal right to trade and settle in every part of the country; but that neither the one nor the other could have absolute control over any part of it till the question of ownership should be determined. The treaty also guarded the rights of other nations.[1] It is well to remember that

[1] At this time neither Spain nor Russia had formally given up their claims to territory in the Oregon country. In 1819,

in this first diplomatic discussion over Oregon, the United States was willing to accept the 49th parallel as a boundary, while Great Britain would probably have been satisfied with the Columbia.

Lack of interest in the Oregon country. Bryant and Kelley

On many accounts it seems very unfortunate that the question could not have been settled in 1818 by dividing the country on the 49th parallel as was done after so much wrangling twenty-eight years later. Possibly a little greater determination on the part of our government might have brought this about, and saved us the long quarrel with Great Britain. But the fact is that very few people were then giving the slightest thought to the far-off region beyond the Rockies. Bryant wrote of it in 1817 as, —

> "The continuous woods
> Where rolls the Oregon and hears no sound
> Save his own dashings."[1]

however, when Florida was purchased by the United States, Spain yielded to our government all her rights north of the 42d parallel of latitude, so that whatever rights she may once have had in the Oregon country henceforth belonged to the United States. Five years later an agreement was made between the United States and Russia by which the two nations established the line of 54° 40′ as a boundary for trading purposes. Thus the question of the ownership of the Oregon country was left to be worked out between the people of the United States and the government of Great Britain.

[1] Because of the popularity of the poem "Thanatopsis," in which the lines appeared, the name "Oregon" was brought prominently before the country. Bryant obtained the word from Carver's Travels.

Only one person seems to have been fully alive to the fact that we had rights there which ought to be carefully looked after. This was an eccentric Boston schoolmaster named Hall J. Kelley, who began now to agitate the Oregon question.

John Floyd introduces the Oregon question in Congress, December 20, 1820

It may be that some of Kelley's pamphlets or letters reached men connected with the United States government. At all events, on the 20th of December, 1820, a young Virginian by the name of John Floyd brought the question forward for the first time in the Congress of the United States. He wished "to inquire into the situation of the settlements on the Pacific Ocean, and the expediency of occupying the Columbia River." In January, 1821, he made a report on the subject of our rights west of the Rockies, and a little later presented a bill for planting a fort at the mouth of the Columbia, and for granting lands to settlers.

The first congressional debate on Oregon; Floyd's speech

It was many months before Floyd was able to get a hearing; but in 1822 he brought in another bill which aroused much interest in Congress and drew the attention of the country to the Oregon question. In the debate which occurred Floyd took the leading part. He was one of those men who have the power of looking beyond the present, and seeing in imagination the changes likely to occur in future years. Though he lived in Virginia, Floyd

knew what was going on beyond the mountains, and was thrilled by the spectacle of America's wonderful growth, which he believed to be due largely to her free system of government. In the space of forty-three years, he said, Virginia's population had spread westward more than a thousand miles. He evidently believed it would not be long before Americans would reach the Rockies, and stand ready to descend into the Oregon country. This was a new thought, just beginning to take hold of the American people, and as yet quite startling to most men who, in spite of what had already been done, found it difficult to conceive of the American population actually expanding till it should reach the Pacific. But he only hinted at these things, knowing very well that most members of Congress would regard predictions of this kind as the merest folly. Floyd's main argument had to do with the importance of the Columbia River to American commerce. Our people ought to have the benefit of the fur trade now going to British subjects; many whalers from New England annually visited the Oregon coast and needed some safe port in which to refit and take supplies; the trade with China would be greatly advanced by maintaining a colony on the Pacific. He tried to show that the Missouri and Columbia together would form a good highway for commerce across the

continent, and that the entire distance between St. Louis and Astoria could be traversed with steamboat and wagon in the space of forty-four days.

Mr. Bailies's remarkable predictions

Other speakers also urged the commercial importance of a fort at the mouth of the Columbia. Mr. Bailies of Massachusetts declared that in all probability there would one day be a canal connecting the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, which would be an added reason for maintaining a colony on the Pacific. Most persons feared that Americans going to this distant land would separate from us and set up a government for themselves; but Mr. Bailies pointed out that such a canal would bind them closely to us. Yet, if they should form an independent American state on the Pacific, even this would be better than to have that region pass into the hands of foreigners, or be left a savage wilderness. "I would delight," said the speaker, "to know that in this desolate spot, where the prowling cannibal now lurks in the forest, hung round with human bones and with human scalps, the temples of justice and the temples of God were reared, and man made sensible of the beneficent intentions of his creator." The country, he said, had made marvelous progress within the memories of living men, and with the fervor of an ancient prophet he continued: "Some now within

these walls may, before they die, witness scenes more wonderful than these; and in after times may cherish delightful recollections of this day, when America, almost shrinking from the 'shadows of coming events,' first placed her feet upon untrodden ground, scarcely daring to anticipate the greatness which awaited her."

The practical man's view of the Oregon question

To show how the hard-headed, practical men comprising the majority in Congress treated such idealists as Floyd and Bailies, we have only to turn to the opposition speech of Mr. Tracy of New York. He declared that there was no real demand for a fort and colony on the Columbia. No one had shown that it would benefit commerce. It was visionary to expect an overland commercial connection with the Pacific Ocean. Military posts ought not to be used to draw population far away into the wilderness, but merely to protect the frontier. Mr. Tracy had received accurate information about the territory along the Columbia, from men who had visited that region, and was sure that its agricultural possibilities had been greatly overestimated. As a final argument, he declared that the people on the Pacific and those on the Atlantic could never live under the same government. "Nature," said Mr. Tracy, "has fixed limits for our nation; she has kindly interposed as our western barrier mountains almost inaccessible, whose base

she has skirted with irreclaimable deserts of sand."[1]

Defeat of Floyd's bill

On the 23d of January, 1823, after a long and vigorous debate, Floyd's bill came to a vote in the House of Representatives and was defeated, one hundred to sixty-one. The time had not yet come for an American colony on the Pacific, because the government was unwilling to plant such a settlement, and the people were not yet thinking of Oregon as a "pioneer's land of promise." Only a few men, and those of the rarer sort, looked forward to the occupation of the Columbia region as a step toward the establishment of a greater America, with a frontage on the Pacific Ocean similar to that which we then had upon the Atlantic.[2]

Diplomatic negotiations over Oregon, 1824–1827

We must now turn from Congress, where Oregon bills were brought up nearly every ses-

[1] From the time of Long's exploring expedition to the Rocky Mountains (1819), the western portion of the Great Plains was called the "Great American Desert."

[2] Strangely enough none of the speakers in the House seemed to suspect that we might not have a right, under the treaty of joint occupation, to plant a military colony at the mouth of the Columbia, or that Great Britain had an actual claim to the country which was protected by that treaty.

Only one man appeared to understand the situation clearly, Senator Benton of Missouri. He believed that if the British remained in sole possession of Oregon till 1828, the year that the treaty of joint occupation was to expire, they would remain for a still longer period; and in a speech in the Senate he favored an American colony on the Columbia as a means of maintaining our rights in the country.

sion till the end of 1827, but always in vain, to see what was being done for Oregon elsewhere. The discussion of 1822–1823 had brought the matter home to the people and the government in such a way that statesmen began to see the importance of settling the question. An attempt was made in the year 1824, but it failed. Great Britain claimed a right for her people to trade and make settlements in any part of the Oregon country, admitting that our citizens had the same, but no greater right. Our government, through Secretary of State, J. Q. Adams, claimed that we had a clear title to territory on the Pacific as high up as 51°, but we were willing once more, as in 1818, to take the 49th parallel. This first negotiation was conducted by Mr. Richard Rush. Two years later the government sent over its most accomplished diplomat, Albert Gallatin. John Quincy Adams was at that time President of the United States, and Henry Clay Secretary of State. It was these three men who, under Gallatin's skillful leadership, had secured the favorable treaty of peace with Great Britain in 1814. Now they were all working together once more, though in a different way, trying to obtain treaties which should settle several important commercial questions, as well as the Oregon boundary. Gallatin spent more than a year in London, had many long discussions with the

British diplomats, and secured four separate treaties, one of which, agreed upon August 6th, 1827, referred to the Oregon question but did not settle it.

Gallatin's failure and its probable cause

Gallatin, like Rush, offered to extend the 49th parallel to the Pacific as the boundary, but Great Britain insisted on her right to the territory west and north of the Columbia, and no compromise could be reached. Her representatives entered upon long arguments to show that their government had rights below the 49th parallel. They denied that Gray's discovery of the river, or even Lewis and Clark's exploration, gave Americans an exclusive right to the Columbia valley; and they properly laid great stress upon the explorations which British navigators like Cook and Vancouver had made along the coast north of the river. But while these arguments had a measure of justice in them, there is reason to believe that Great Britain was simply determined upon delay in settling the question. Her subjects had expended large sums of money to develop the trade of that country; they were in control, gathering their annual cargoes of furs, and the government was naturally anxious to protect their interests. Our people had created no property rights in Oregon since Astor's time; very few had ever set foot west of the Rockies, and it would probably

be many years before they would be prepared to settle in the country. Meantime the British fur traders might as well continue to profit from their advantages. But once let Americans rather than Englishmen come into practical control of the Columbia valley, and the British government would soon be ready to settle the question. Gallatin knew this, and so did President Adams. They were therefore the less unwilling to accept a simple renewal of "joint occupation" for an indefinite time. America must wait for the full establishment of her rights in Oregon upon the movements of the American pioneers.

CHAPTER X

PIONEERS OF THE PIONEERS

The West about 1820

We have seen that in 1800 the region west of the Alleghanies had a population of about three hundred and twenty-five thousand. Twenty years later, when Mr. Floyd and a few others began to dream about expansion to the Pacific, the West already contained more than two million people, nearly one tenth of whom (two hundred thousand) were living beyond the Mississippi. The country had entered upon a period of marvelous growth. Many thousands of emigrants were crossing the mountains each year, forests were leveled as if by a sort of magic, and a single season often saw great stretches of wild prairie transformed into fields of wheat and corn. In such pioneer states as Indiana and Illinois the wild game was rapidly disappearing from the river valleys as new settlers entered to make clearings and build homes. Many of the rude hamlets of twenty years before had given place to progressive and wealthy towns, thriving upon the business of the growing communities about them. Louisville, Cincinnati, New Orleans, and St. Louis

had already become places of note, and controlled the commerce of the West much as New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and Baltimore dominated the eastern section of the United States. The western rivers were alive with noisy little steamboats, one of which had recently ascended the Missouri to the mouth of Platte River.[1] Roads were being opened everywhere, and the Erie Canal was under construction from the Hudson River to Lake Erie. The frontier of settlement was in the western part of Missouri, whence a trail had already been opened to Santa Fé, while others led far into the great plains toward the west and northwest.

The American fur trade of the far west[2]

Beyond the frontiers the trapper hunted the beaver streams, and the trader carried his tempting wares to the Indian villages, much as they had done twenty, fifty, or a hundred years before. Yet in some respects great changes had occurred in the western fur trade. From the time of Lewis and Clark's return and the opening of the Missouri River country, American traders had shown a strong disposition to

[1] The *Western Engineer*, employed as part of Long's exploring equipment in 1819.

[2] Under the above title Captain H. M. Chittenden has recently given us a remarkably complete, accurate, and interesting history of the fur trade throughout the great region west of the Mississippi. His book, which cost years of patient research, was published in 1902 (3 vols.).

organize for the better regulation of the business. The Missouri Fur Company, founded in 1808 for the purpose of controlling the trade of the Missouri River, was the pioneer of such associations in the United States, and it soon made St. Louis a great fur-trading center.[1] But, while remarkably successful elsewhere, this company did not succeed after all in gaining commercial possession of the upper Missouri, because of the hostile Blackfeet. In 1822 a new company was organized at St. Louis by General William H. Ashley, whose plan in the beginning was to establish trading posts at favorable points on the upper Missouri, like the mouth of the Yellowstone, and keep agents in the country. The Blackfeet, however, could not be pacified, and this method had to be given up. Ashley then adopted the policy of sending bands of trappers to form camps in the best beaver districts, and trap out the streams one after another.

American trappers cross the Rockies

Under leaders like David Jackson and William L. Sublette, these parties not only gathered the fur harvest of some of the Missouri fields, but traversed the country for great distances to the southwest, far into the Rocky Mountains. Finally they entered the region tributary to the Columbia, and came into com-

[1] Astor tried to combine with this company, but was unable to do so.

petition with the traders and trappers of the Hudson's Bay Company.[1] It was the clashing of skirmishers. Behind the one party was a powerful commercial organization, and a proud but distant government jealous of their legal rights; behind the other was a rapidly expanding nation, whose people would one day be prepared to follow the traders across the Rockies, and plant American colonies on the coasts of the South Sea.

Wanderings of Jedediah S. Smith

In 1826 General Ashley turned over his business to Jedediah S. Smith, David Jackson, and William L. Sublette. The first of these (Smith) immediately set out from their Rocky Mountain camp and with a few men crossed the desert and mountains to California, arriving at San Diego in October, 1826. He remained in the country during the winter, and the following summer returned to Salt Lake. In spite of severe sufferings on his first trip, Smith went back to California the same season, losing most of his men at the hands of the Mojave Indians. In California he got together a new

[1] Several instances are recorded of American trapping companies getting the advantage of British parties in some way and securing their furs. In 1825 General Ashley got possession, for a trifling sum, of about seventy-five thousand dollars' worth of Hudson's Bay furs. We do not know exactly how these peculiar feats of wilderness commerce were performed, though it is pretty certain that the free use of whisky upon opposition trappers was one of the means employed.

party, and in 1828 crossed the mountains northward to Oregon. On the Umpqua River his company was attacked by the Indians and all except the leader and three others killed. Smith also lost his entire catch of furs, his horses, and other property, so that when he arrived at Fort Vancouver (August, 1828) he was in desperate straits. Dr. McLoughlin received him kindly, supplied all his needs, and even sent men to the Umpqua to recover the furs stolen by the savages. Nearly all were secured, and these McLoughlin purchased at the market price, giving the American trader a draft on London for the sum of twenty thousand dollars. From Vancouver Smith went up the Columbia to Clark's Fork, and then to the rendezvous of his company in the Rocky Mountains, having gained the distinction of making the first overland trip from the United States into California, and also the first from California to Oregon.

Wagons cross South Pass; Captain Bonneville

The next spring (1830) Smith, Jackson, and Sublette took the first loaded wagons into the Rocky Mountains to the head of Wind River, having driven from the Missouri along the line of the Platte and the Sweetwater. The partners reported that they could easily have crossed the mountains by way of South Pass. The discovery of this natural highway, so important in the history of the entire Pacific

coast, must be credited to Ashley's trappers, some of whom first made use of it in 1823. Three years later a mounted cannon was taken to Salt Lake by this route, and four years after that loaded wagons crossed over for the first time to the west flowing waters. These vehicles belonged to the train of Captain Bonneville, a Frenchman in the United States army, who turned fur trader in 1832, hoping to gain a fortune like General Ashley. The story of his romantic marches and long detours through the great western wilderness has been charmingly told by Irving in his "Adventures of Captain Bonneville." In the space of about three years he traversed a large portion of the Lewis River valley, and went down the Columbia as far as Fort Walla Walla.[1] But the gallant captain was no match for the shrewd American traders, or for the well-organized British company controlling the Columbia River region, and therefore his venture turned out a complete failure.

Wyeth's trading scheme; the first trip to Oregon

In the same year that Bonneville set out for the West an enterprising Bostonian, Captain Nathaniel J. Wyeth, also entered the Oregon country for the purpose of trade. Wyeth had long been familiar with the writings of Hall J. Kelley concerning Oregon, and in the sum-

[1] A few of his men, under Joseph Walker, went to California in 1833–1834. Some of them remained there as settlers.

mer of 1831 he arranged a plan to send a ship around Cape Horn while he, with a party of landsmen, was to proceed across the country hoping to meet the vessel near the mouth of the Columbia. A company of Boston merchants furnished the vessel, which sailed in the fall of 1831. Wyeth gathered a small party of men, formed a sort of "Wild West" camp on an island in Boston Harbor, greatly to the astonishment of most people, and in spring was ready to begin the overland march. Knowing that the trip would have to be made partly by land and partly by water, the ingenious Yankee invented a machine which could be used either as a wagon bed or a boat. This the Latin scholars at Harvard College named the "Nat Wyethium." He found it less useful than at first supposed and left it at St. Louis. At that place Wyeth and his men joined a party of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company under William L. Sublette, with whom they made the trip to the Rocky Mountains by means of a pack train. Here some of the men turned back discouraged, so that the last portion of the trip was made with only eleven men. This little party reached Vancouver, October 24, 1832. The ship had not arrived, and they soon learned that she had been wrecked at the Society Islands. Wyeth therefore returned to Boston in 1833, leaving a few

of his men, who became the first agricultural settlers of Oregon. The business part of the enterprise had failed completely.

Wyeth's second expedition

But Wyeth was plucky, and had great faith in the prospects for a profitable commercial enterprise in the Oregon country. The salmon fishery of the Columbia was a possible source of great wealth, and he proposed to couple fur trading with it. He therefore induced the Boston partners to supply another ship, the *May Dacre*, which was sent down the coast in the fall of 1833. Wyeth himself made the trip overland once more in the summer of 1834. This time he took a number of wagons from St. Louis, with goods which had been ordered by the Rocky Mountain Fur Company. When the company refused to receive them, Wyeth selected a place near the junction of the Lewis and Portneuf rivers, where he built Fort Hall and began trading with the Indians on his own account by means of an agent left there. He then passed on down the river, reaching Vancouver in September. Once more the energetic captain was disappointed, for the *May Dacre*, which had been expected to reach the Columbia early in the summer, during the salmon fishing season, came in tardily the day after the land party arrived. Nothing could then be done about fishing, so Wyeth sent her to the Hawaiian Islands with a cargo of timber,

while he spent the winter in trapping beaver on the streams south of the Columbia, principally the Des Chutes. By the middle of February he was back at Vancouver, the guest of McLoughlin. His trading plans were now all ruined. Nothing could be done with the fur trade in opposition to the Hudson's Bay Company. His trading establishment at Fort Hall did not prosper, the fisheries and other commerce amounted to little. Wyeth lingered in the country till the summer of 1836, when he returned to Boston and soon closed out his business in Oregon. Some of the men left by him began the business of farming, with the assistance of the Hudson's Bay Company. Thus Wyeth's enterprise is in a very real sense a bridge between the purely commercial era of northwestern history and the era of actual colonization.[1]

But there was also another motive, very

[1] Wyeth kept a regular journal, which has been preserved in the family of one of his descendants. A few years ago the manuscript was sent from Massachusetts to Oregon and published (1899), together with a large number of Wyeth's letters, under the editorial direction of Professor F. G. Young, secretary of the Oregon Historical Society. The volume forms an invaluable source for the study of conditions in Oregon, and the state of the western fur trade, during the years covered. A very rare book on the first part of the first Wyeth expedition is the little volume by John B. Wyeth, published at Boston in 1833. Only a few copies are now in existence. It is, however, being reprinted under the editorship of Reuben Gold Thwaites, LL.D.

Indian missions in the West

different from that influencing the fur trader, that was drawing men into the great western wilds and on toward the Pacific Ocean. This was the desire on the part of many good men to do something for the improvement of the Indians. There was nothing new in this any more than in the fur trade; but in the one case as in the other the period we have now reached witnesses a great expansion of effort and better organization. A few missionaries had labored among the Indians west of the Alleghanies since the first settlers crossed those mountains, and some of the tribes had made good progress in the direction of civilization. With the purchase of Louisiana, however, it became the policy of the government to induce those living east of the river to go to the new territory on the western side in order to make room for the expanding white settlements.[1] Some crossed over freely, or at least with little objection, but others refused to go. After a time the government undertook to remove them. This caused great distress among the Indians, and likewise produced a mighty wave of sympathy for the red men. The newspapers recited their sufferings, and quoted the pathetic speeches of

[1] Writing of the significance of Louisiana shortly after the purchase, Jefferson said, "It will also open an asylum for these unhappy people [the Indians], in a country which may suit their habits of life better than that they now occupy, which perhaps they will be willing to exchange with us."

Indian chiefs, forced to leave "the land of their fathers, where the Indian fires were going out." Missionaries followed, without hesitation, to the strange lands where "new fires were lighting in the West," and soon a considerable number of devoted men were at work among the tribes living between the Mississippi and the Rocky Mountains. Some were laboring among peoples they had known east of the river; some sought out new fields on the Missouri, the Kansas, the Platte, and other streams, where they preached, taught the Indian children to read, and often induced the natives to till the soil and live in permanent houses, instead of wandering about in pursuit of game. Sometimes the government employed the missionaries as teachers or Indian agents, and often assisted them by providing a blacksmith to make tools and farming implements.

The Nez Percés delegation to St. Louis

Since these things were going on in many places throughout the West, and since a few persons like Hall J. Kelley had already been writing about the Oregon Indians in connection with plans for settling that country, it is not strange, but perfectly natural, that men should at last undertake to Christianize the tribes living on the Pacific coast. A little incident occurring in 1831 or 1832 (the date is in doubt), was sufficient to start the first missionaries across the mountains. As the story goes, the nations

of the upper Columbia had learned from British traders something about the white man's religion. Wishing to know more, the Nez Percés sent four of their leading men to St. Louis to see General Clark, whom they remembered as having once visited their country, to ask for "the white man's book of heaven," as the Bible was called among them. These Indians, setting out on their strange and interesting mission, crossed the mountains and the plains in safety and reached St. Louis, where they were kindly received by General Clark. Two of them died while in the city. The remaining two started for their own country in spring, but one died before reaching the mountains.

Beginnings of the Willamette mission

The story of these four Indians, and their long journey to the East in search of spiritual help and guidance, was soon published in the religious papers and created the keenest interest. First to respond to the call for teachers was the Methodist denomination, which in 1833 commissioned Rev. Jason Lee to begin work among the Flatheads.[1] Learning of Wyeth's plan to return to Oregon in spring, Lee arranged to have all the provisions and equipments for the new mission taken to the Columbia in the *May Dacre*, while he and his nephew,

[1] The Indians who went to St. Louis were often spoken of as Flatheads, though in fact they appear to have belonged to the Nez Percés branch.

Daniel Lee, and three laymen, Cyrus Shepard, P. L. Edwards, and C. M. Walker, joined Wyeth's overland party and made their way to the Columbia. They decided, for various reasons, to let the Flatheads wait and to begin work among the Indians on the Willamette. All went down to Vancouver, arriving in the month of September, 1834. When the *May Dacre* came in with their supplies, the missionaries explored the country for a suitable site. "On the east side of the river [Willamette], and sixty miles from its mouth, a location was chosen to begin a mission. Here was a broad, rich bottom, many miles in length, well watered and supplied with timber, oak, fir, cottonwood, white maple, and white oak, scattered along its grassy plains."[1] They immediately began preparing materials for a house and when the rains of winter came had a respectable shelter. At the same time land was fenced for cropping, a barn built, and other improvements made; so that the establishment took on the appearance of a prosperous woodland farm.

The first Oregon colony

The missionaries were not the only settlers in the Willamette valley. On arriving here they found about a dozen white men already

[1] Lee and Frost's "The First Ten Years of Oregon," reprinted by the *Oregonian*, Sunday edition, October 11 to January 10, 1903–1904.

occupying little farms, scattered along the river, where they lived in log cabins with Indian wives and families of children. Most of them were former servants of the Hudson's Bay Company who had either become unfit to range the forest, or preferred to settle down to cultivate the soil and live a quiet life. Dr. McLoughlin furnished them stock and provisions, as he did the men left in the country

OLD MISSION HOUSE, OREGON.

by Wyeth, receiving his pay in wheat when the crops were harvested, and in young stock to take the place of full-grown animals which he supplied. Here was the beginning of the first agricultural colony in Oregon, and it was this mixed community into which the missionaries now came as a new influence, tending to bring about better social conditions.

Progress of the mission

From the first, the missionaries were more successful in their efforts among the neighboring settlers than with the surrounding Indians.

They opened a school, maintained religious services, and soon organized a temperance society which, partly through Dr. McLoughlin's influence, many of the white men joined. The Indian children were admitted to their school, and some of them made fair progress in learning. Orphans were adopted into the mission family from time to time, receiving in this way greater benefits from their contact with civilization. In 1837 the mission was reënforced by the arrival of twenty assistants sent from the East in two vessels.[1] New efforts were now made to Christianize the Indians of the Willamette, and the following year a branch mission was begun at the Dalles of the Columbia. This became an important station; but the work in the valley did not flourish, for the natives were a sickly, degraded race, almost beyond the reach of aid, and were rapidly dying off.

Parker's tour

Let us now see what was going on in other portions of the Oregon country. The story of the Nez Percés delegation to St. Louis had affected other denominations as well as the

[1] The first party arrived in May, and contained Dr. and Mrs. Elijah White, with two children; Mr. Alanson Beers, his wife and three children; three young women, Miss Pitman, who was soon married to Rev. Jason Lee and who died the following year, Miss Susan Downing, who married Mr. Shepard, and Miss Elvira Johnson; and one unmarried man, Mr. W. H. Wilson. The second company, arriving in September, consisted of seven persons: Rev. David Leslie, wife and three children, Miss Margaret J. Smith, and Mr. H. K. W. Perkins.

Methodists, and in 1835 the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions sent out Dr. Samuel Parker to inquire into the prospects for missionary work among the Oregon Indians. Mr. Parker was accompanied by a pious young physician, Dr. Marcus Whitman. Together they made the overland trip from Liberty, Missouri, with a party of Rocky Mountain trappers. Arriving at Pierre's Hole, they found Indians of several Columbia River tribes, who all seemed anxious to have missionaries settle among them. Thinking, therefore, that the main point was now gained, Dr. Whitman returned to the East to bring out assistants and supplies to begin one or more missions. Dr. Parker went on, under Indian guidance, to the Columbia, arriving at Fort Vancouver on the 16th of October. Here he spent the winter as the guest of Dr. McLoughlin, and when spring came set out for the upper country. He stopped at Fort Walla Walla, where he preached to a multitude of Indians. Then journeying up the valley of Walla Walla River he observed, some twenty miles from the Columbia, "a delightful situation for a missionary establishment. . . . A mission located on this fertile field," he says, "would draw around [it] an interesting settlement, who would fix down to cultivate the soil and to be instructed: How easily might the plow go through these

vallies, and what rich and abundant harvests might be gathered by the hand of industry." From this place he went up the Lewis River, where he seems to have fixed upon another site for a mission, and then struck off northward, exploring the beautiful valley of Spokane River. Here, too, were many Indians, who appeared to be anxious for religious instruction. Later in the year (1836) Dr. Parker sailed from Vancouver for the Hawaiian Islands, whence he returned to the Atlantic coast by way of Cape Horn, reaching his home at Ithaca, New York, in May, 1837, after an absence of more than two years.[1]

The Whitman party of missionaries

When Dr. Whitman returned to New York in the fall of 1835, with a report that the Columbia River Indians were eager for teachers, the board at once commissioned him to superintend the planting of a mission in that country. He had some trouble to find helpers, but at last Mr. and Mrs. H. H. Spalding consented to go with Whitman and his newly married wife. Mr. W. H. Gray also joined the party. It must have required a great deal of courage for these two women to undertake the overland trip, which thus far had been accomplished by none but men. At Liberty, Missouri, the missionaries joined a company of fur traders, and

[1] The following year Dr. Parker published his interesting little book called "An Exploring Tour Beyond the Rocky Mountains."

traveled with them to the mountains. In addition to saddle horses and pack animals, Whitman had provided his party with a one-horse wagon. At that time there was no road beyond Fort Hall, but on account of Mrs. Spalding's feeble health, which made it impossible for her to keep the saddle, he drove this vehicle as far as Fort Boise on Lewis River, thus opening a new stage in the wagon road to the Columbia.

Beginnings of the interior missions

Arriving at Fort Vancouver in September, the women were left under the protection of Dr. McLoughlin's family, while the men went up the river to begin the missions. On the Walla Walla River, about twenty miles above the fort, was a place which the Indians called Waiilatpu, where the first establishment was begun. In this prairie country timber was very scarce, and therefore the missionaries built their house of "adobes," large brick made of clay and baked by exposure in the sun.[1] This finished, the second station was begun on the Clearwater, at its junction with the Lapwai, a short distance below the point where Lewis and Clark, in 1805, reached the navigable waters of the Columbia. The place was in the midst of the Nez Percés country, about one hundred

[1] These particular brick were twenty inches long, ten inches wide, and four inches thick, as Dr. Whitman wrote to a fellow-missionary on Platte River.

and twenty miles east of Waiilatpu. Mr. and Mrs. Spalding took up their abode here while the Whitmans remained at the Walla Walla station.

Expansion of the work; Spokane mission

The Indians of this country were far superior in every way to those of western Oregon. They were wanderers during a good share of the year, but the winters were usually spent in fixed places, where they could be reached with ease. It was not long before many of them became interested in the schools established at both missions for their benefit, and after a time some were taken into the church. Special efforts were made to teach them to depend more upon agriculture and less upon hunting, fishing, and the search for camas roots. It was easy to cultivate the soil in this region, as Dr. Parker foresaw, so that the Indians were soon raising little fields of corn and patches of potatoes, which added much to their comfort and well-being. In the spring of 1837 Whitman planted twelve acres of corn and one acre of potatoes, besides peas and barley. A few cattle were early procured from the East, and these multiplying rapidly, and being added to from time to time, soon developed into considerable herds, of which the Indians secured a share. In the fall of 1838 a small party came from the East overland to reënforce the up-river missions. It consisted

of Rev. Cushing Eells and wife, Rev. Elkanah Walker and wife, Rev. A. B. Smith and wife, Mr. W. H. Gray and wife, and Mr. C. Rogers.[1] Now it was determined to occupy the northernmost of the three mission fields selected by Dr. Parker, the Spokane country, where the families of Walker and Eells establish themselves in the spring of 1839.[2]

Life at the interior missions

Thus the tribes of the interior country were at last brought under the influence of a few men and women wholly devoted to their welfare, and understanding with a fair degree of clearness how to guide these barbarians along the path of civilization. The task was stupendous; but the missionaries knew it was not impossible, and labored with exemplary courage. They preached to the natives as regularly as possible, gathered the children and their elders in the schools, translated portions of the Bible into the Indian language and printed them on a little press, the gift of the Hawaiian missionaries; they helped the Indians build houses for themselves, showed them how to till their fields and lead water upon the growing crops; they erected rude mills to grind

[1] Gray, who came to the Columbia in 1836 with Whitman and Spalding, had gone back to secure help, and was married before returning.

[2] This place was known as Tsimakane. For a short time a station was also occupied at Kamiah, on Lewis River.

their corn and wheat. Work was more than abundant for these few men and women, yet this only made their condition the more pitiable for its intense loneliness. The families were so widely separated that visits required a great deal of time, which could seldom be spared. Once a year the men from the several stations

TSIMAKANE MISSION.

gathered at Waiilatpu to conduct the annual business of the mission, and occasionally two or three families managed to be together for a brief time. But for the most part they depended on letters sent by Indian carriers to keep them in touch with their fellow-workers, and on trading or trapping parties to bring news from down the river, where social life was so much brighter, and where ships came in from

foreign shores. Toward the end of the long summer, when the corn was ripening in the field, they looked with longing for the annual pack train coming down from the Blue Mountains, which usually brought letters from friends in eastern homes, and sometimes a welcome traveler or missionary.

CHAPTER XI

THE COLONIZING MOVEMENT

Ten years of official inactivity, 1827-1837

THE United States government, in all its departments, dropped the Oregon question when Gallatin secured the second treaty of joint occupation. For nearly ten years after that date neither Congress nor the executive made any move of importance toward settling the dispute with England, or assisting American citizens to gain a foothold within the Oregon country. Yet this period, 1827–1837, is of great importance in the history of Oregon because of the doings of the first pioneers as described in the preceding chapter. Trappers, traders, and missionaries had entered the region; and while little impression was made upon the business of the Hudson's Bay Company, a few Americans remained to till the soil and to instruct the Indians in religious things. This created a bond between the United States and the distant Columbia which forced the government to take an interest in that country. The question of the future of Texas had also compelled the United States to concern itself about the Mexican territories, and at one time (1835)

President Jackson was anxious to buy northern California in order to secure the fine harbor of San Francisco. Accordingly, he sent an agent, Mr. W. A. Slacum, to the Pacific to collect information for the government, and on this voyage the first official visit was paid to Oregon.

Slacum's visit to Oregon

Slacum arrived in the Columbia River at the end of the year 1836, with particular instructions from President Jackson to govern his doings there. He was to visit all the white settlements on and near the Columbia, as well as the various Indian villages; to make a complete census of both whites and Indians, and to learn what the white people thought about the question of American rights in Oregon. Briefly, he was to "obtain all such information . . . as [might] prove interesting or useful to the United States." Mr. Slacum performed his work with a good deal of thoroughness. He made charts of the Columbia River, locating all the principal Indian villages; visited Fort Vancouver to learn about the fur trade and other business of the establishment; and went up the Willamette valley to the Methodist mission, calling at nearly every settler's cabin passed on the way. He was pleased with the country, found the missionaries doing good work among the French and other settlers, and became enthusiastic over the agricultural

advantages of the Willamette valley. He pronounced it "the finest grazing country in the world. Here there are no droughts," he says, "as on the Pampas of Buenos Ayres or the plains of California, whilst the lands abound with richer grasses both winter and summer."

The Willamette Cattle Company, 1837

Mr. Slacum believed that if the settlers could be better provided with cattle, which were as yet comparatively scarce, the prosperity of the country would be assured; and with this idea the Oregon people heartily agreed. The Hudson's Bay Company, while generous in providing farmers with work oxen, were not prepared to sell breeding stock freely, because their herds were not yet large enough to more than supply their own needs. The only practical way to obtain more cattle was to bring them overland from California, where the Mexican ranchers were slaughtering many thousands each year for the sake of the hides and tallow which they sold mainly to Boston shipowners.[1] There was one settler in the Willamette valley who was familiar with California, having lived there several years before coming to Oregon. This was Ewing Young, a man of considerable talent and enterprise, who

[1] One of the most entertaining books on early California is Richard H. Dana's classic story, "Two Years Before the Mast." It gives an account of the author's experience while a sailor on one of the "hide and tallow" ships trading along the California coast.

now headed a movement for bringing cattle from the South.[1] Slacum encouraged the project in every way, especially by offering to carry to California without expense the men who were to go for the purpose of securing cattle. An association was formed, with Young at its head, that took the name of the "Willamette Cattle Company." A fund of several thousand dollars was subscribed, partly by Dr. McLoughlin for the fur company, partly by the Methodist mission, and the remainder by individuals. Mr. Slacum himself took a small financial interest in the company. Ewing Young and P. L. Edwards, with a few others, took passage in the *Loriot* (Slacum's ship) to California, where they bought eight hundred head of cattle at three dollars apiece, and forty horses at twelve dollars apiece. After many vexations and hardships they arrived in the Willamette valley with six hundred head of stock, the remainder having been lost by the way.

The bringing of these cattle, in the fall of 1837, marks the opening of a new era for Oregon.

[1] Young was a noted frontiersman, originally from Tennessee, who early began trading in New Mexico. From there he went to California in 1829 and came to Oregon overland with a few others in 1834, driving a band of horses. One of his companions on this trip was the famous Oregon agitator, Hall J. Kelley, of Boston. Kelley had expected to bring out a colony to Oregon in 1832; but failing to secure colonists, he finally started on his own account, going to Mexico, thence to California, and finally with Young to Oregon.

It gave a great stimulus to stock raising, for which the country was specially adapted, promoted the prosperity of the settlers already there, and, by the reports which soon traveled eastward, caused many people in the Mississippi valley to look with longing eyes toward this land of ease and plenty, thus preparing the way for the colonizing movement which was about to begin.

Renewal of Oregon agitation in Congress

Mr. Slacum returned to the United States and made his report to the government. In December, 1837, this document, so interesting as the earliest particular account of the Willamette settlement, was presented to Congress and immediately aroused great interest. One of the points which Slacum insisted upon was that the United States must never accept a northern boundary for Oregon that would give to the British government the great harbor of Puget Sound. In other words, his idea was that we should hold out sturdily for the 49th parallel, already thrice offered, and refuse utterly to take Great Britain's offer of the Columbia boundary. This doubtless strengthened the determination of a few leaders in Congress to secure a law for the military occupation of the Columbia, similar to that which Mr. Floyd tried to obtain fifteen years earlier. At all events, the Oregon question now came up once more and remained

before Congress, in some form, during the succeeding ten years, till Oregon was effectively settled by the pioneers, a favorable treaty obtained from Great Britain, and an American territory created on the Pacific coast.

Linn's bill and report, January and June, 1838

Of the many men who took part in the Oregon discussions, between the years 1837 and 1843, none was more active or determined than Dr. Lewis F. Linn, senator from Missouri. He believed thoroughly in American rights on the Pacific, was inclined to belittle the British claims, and insisted on the urgent necessity of taking military possession of the Columbia River. He proposed also to establish a territorial government for Oregon. His first bill for these purposes was presented to the Senate in January, 1838, and in June Dr. Linn brought in a report on the Oregon question. This was a lengthy document, containing a history of the events on which our right to the Oregon country rested, and trying to show that the British claim was not well founded. In these respects it differed little from the earlier report by Floyd; yet on many points Linn was able to give information never before presented to the country. For example, he described the road to Oregon, which had recently been traversed by two women in the Whitman-Spalding party. Many brief documents containing valuable information were

printed as appendices to the report, which thus became a sort of text-book for the study of the Oregon question. Thousands of copies were printed, and in the next few years they were distributed all over the country, especially through the West, with the result that numbers of men soon became interested in "our territory on the Pacific," as Oregon was frequently called.[1]

Jason Lee's return. The Farnham party

Other influences were working to the same effect. Jason Lee, the superintendent of the Willamette mission, returned to the United States in the summer of 1838 "to obtain additional facilities to carry on . . . the missionary work in Oregon territory." He traveled overland with a few companions, passing through the frontier settlements of Missouri and Illinois, where he accepted invitations to lecture and to preach in the churches. A principal aim was to raise money for his missionary enterprise, but incidentally Lee aroused a good deal of enthusiasm for the far-off country, so rich in natural resources, where he had lived during the preceding four years, almost within sight of the Pacific Ocean. At Peoria, Illinois, he left one of two Indian boys who had gone east with him, and perhaps partly on that account a special interest was aroused at that place. In

[1] When the pioneers began to go to Oregon copies of Linn's Report were among the very few books taken across the plains.

the following spring Mr. Thomas J. Farnham of Peoria, with a company of fourteen men, undertook the overland trip to Oregon. He failed to keep his party together, and finished the journey with but three associates. Farnham visited the Whitman mission, and later the Willamette settlement, after which he took ship to the Hawaiian Islands and to California. On his return to the United States he published popular accounts of the Oregon country, as well as of California, which were widely read and helped to swell the rising tide of interest in the far west.

Petitions and memorials

The settlers in the Willamette valley intrusted Farnham with a memorial to Congress, asking that the protection of the United States government might be extended over them. Lee had carried with him from Oregon a similar petition, which was presented to Congress in January, 1839, by Senator Linn. It spoke of the fertility of the Willamette and Umpqua valleys, the unsurpassed facilities for stock raising, the mild and pleasant climate of western Oregon, and the exceptional opportunities for commerce. A special point was made of the growing trade with the Hawaiian Islands, whose people needed the beef and flour produced in the Willamette valley, and would soon be able to exchange for them coffee, sugar, and other tropical products required by the

Oregon settlers.[1] "We flatter ourselves," say the thirty-six signers of the memorial, "that we are the germ of a great state. . . . The country must populate. The Congress of the United States must say by whom. The natural resources of the country, with a well-judged civil code, will invite a good community. But a good community will hardly emigrate to a country which promises no protection to life or property. . . ." Lee personally wrote a letter to Congressman Caleb Cushing of Massachusetts, in which he reënforced the statements made in the petition.[2] "It may be thought," he says, "that Oregon is of little im-

[1] The discovery of these islands by Captain Cook in January, 1778, proved of great importance in Pacific coast history. Their situation made them the natural calling place for all vessels coming up the coast from Cape Horn, and also for ships crossing the Pacific to or from China. When discovered, the several islands of the group were occupied by barbarous tribes, each independent of all the others. About the close of the eighteenth century there arose a great chief called Kamehameha, who succeeded in uniting most of the tribes, and in opening trade with the owners of ships calling at the Islands. A prosperous era now began. In 1820 American missionaries established themselves at Honolulu, and soon this place became a center of civilization affecting all the tribes. The relations of the Hawaiian missionaries with the American people in Oregon, and afterward in California, was always very close. Visits were occasionally made to the Pacific coast, and, as stated in the last chapter, the Hawaiian missionaries presented those on the Columbia with a small printing-press, the first ever used on the Pacific coast of the United States.

[2] Cushing made a report to the House of Representatives in 1839 which in some respects supplemented the report made by Linn to the Senate the year before.

portance; but depend upon it, sir, there is the germ of a great state." The Oregon people desired from Congress two things: first, the protection of the laws of the United States; second, a guarantee that they might keep the lands already taken up by them. Linn, Cushing, and other men made a faithful effort to obtain such laws; but the prevailing sentiment was against them, and no bill passed either house of Congress till 1843.[1]

The Oregon Provisional Emigration Society; its origin and purpose

We have now to describe a movement arising outside of Congress in the summer of 1838, which added largely to the effect of the agitation begun by Linn and Cushing. This was the so-called Oregon Provisional Emigration Society, organized at Lynn, Massachusetts, in August, 1838. The society was not a missionary organization purely, though most of its leading members belonged to the Methodist denomination. Its aim was "to prepare the way for the Christian settlement of Oregon." It proposed to enlist several hundred Christian families, send them to Oregon overland, and

[1] It was, indeed, a very difficult matter to draw up a bill for the extension of our national authority over Oregon without violating either the letter or the spirit of the treaty of joint occupation. Many members of Congress refused to support the bills presented by Linn and others because it was feared their passage might embroil us with Great Britain. See on this point the valuable paper of Dr. J. R. Wilson on "The Oregon Question," published in the Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society, March and September, 1900.

encourage them to make use of all the advantages for stock raising, commerce, fishing, etc., that the country afforded. But this was not to be the only aim of the settlement, for which the founders of the society had "nobler purposes in view." They believed it might be possible to Christianize the Indians, educate them, and make them citizens of a new commonwealth in which they were to have all the rights and privileges of white citizens. The theory was that while the Indians east of the Rockies had already become hopelessly degraded, those in the Oregon country were still mainly sound, and if taken in time might be saved.

The Oregonian

The society published a monthly magazine called at first *The Oregonian.* The phrase *and Indian's Advocate* was afterward added to the title. It was edited by Rev. Frederick P. Tracy, of Lynn, Massachusetts, who was also the secretary of the society. In the numbers of this magazine we find a large amount of information concerning the Oregon of seventy years ago.[1] The editor grew eloquent

[1] Apparently only eleven numbers were printed. It begins with October, 1838, and ends with August, 1839 Files of this paper are very rare. The writer has seen and used two: the first is in the State Historical Library of Wisconsin, at Madison, the other in the private library of Hon. F. V. Holman of Portland, Oregon. Doubtless there are others, especially in Massachusetts. It contains Linn's and Cushing's reports, a review of Parker's book, letters from missionaries, and other matter concerning Oregon.

in the effort to set before his readers the possibilities of this great country. He called it "the future home of the power which is to rule the Pacific, . . . the theater on which mankind are to act out a part not yet performed in the drama of life and government." Oregon's "far-spreading seas and mighty rivers [were] to teem with the commerce of an empire"; her "boundless prairies and verdant vales [were] to feel the steps of civilized millions; . . ." —

Colonizing plan fails

Such enthusiasm, supported by much valuable information, must have produced considerable effect, since the magazine reached a circulation of nearly eight hundred copies. But in addition to this the society also sent an agent into the western states to enlist emigrants, who were to go to Oregon in the spring of 1840. Nothing came of the colonizing scheme, although the plans had been carefully worked out. It is a most interesting fact that the society had gained the good will of the Hudson's Bay Company in London, and their promise to provide the Oregon colony with merchandise at rates to be agreed upon. The organization appears to have dropped into the background by the end of the year 1839. But by this time there were little knots of men in various parts of the United States, — Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri, — who thought of forming emigration societies to

colonize Oregon. There was some delay in carrying out these plans; but the idea had begun to take hold of the popular mind, and a few years would see the wagon trains gathering for the wonderful journey across the continent.

Lee's missionary colonization scheme

We left Jason Lee busily at work in the eastern states raising money and men for his missionary reënforcement. He was remarkably successful, securing, with the help of the Methodist board, the large sum of forty-two thousand dollars. He got together a company of over fifty persons — men, women, and children — with whom he sailed from New York in the ship *Lausanne* on the 10th of October, 1839. In the following May they reached the mouth of the Columbia from Hawaii, and on the 1st of June all were safely landed at Vancouver. Here the party separated. One of the ministers, Rev. J. H. Frost, was sent to the mouth of the Columbia; Rev. A. F. Waller took charge of a station at Willamette Falls; two others, Rev. W. W. Cone and Rev. Gustavus Hines, went to the Umpqua to begin a new mission, which did not succeed; Mr. Brewer and Dr. Babcock, laymen, reënforced the station at the Dalles; and Rev. J. P. Richmond, with his family and Miss Clark as teacher, went up to the station already begun near Fort Nesqually on Puget Sound. The rest of them passed up the Willamette to the central mission near the present capital city of

Salem, where some took lands, and helped to change this establishment into the true American colony it now became. About the same time a number of Rocky Mountain trappers settled in the valley, and still further increased the American influence. The colony now contained more than a hundred people.

Visit of Lieutenant Wilkes

In the year 1841 Oregon received a visit from Lieutenant Charles Wilkes, commander of the Pacific Exploring Squadron sent out by the United States government in 1838.[1] Wilkes took pains to travel through all the settled portions of the Willamette valley, and gives a detailed account of what he found there. Near the mouth of the river was a group of young men building a small vessel, which they called *The Star of Oregon*, and which was afterward taken to San Francisco and exchanged for cattle. At the falls were Waller's mission and a trading, or rather salmon-packing, station of the Hudson's Bay Company. At a place called Champoeg there were four or five cabins, in one of which Wilkes was entertained by an old seaman, named Johnson, who had fought in the glorious naval battle between the *Constitu-*

[1] Two other noteworthy visitors to Oregon during this year were Sir George Simpson, governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, who was on his trip around the world, and a French diplomat, Duflot de Mofras, at that time connected with the French legation in Mexico. Each wrote a book, in which some account of Oregon is contained.

tion and the *Guerrière*.[1] Farther up the river were observed "many small farms of from fifty to one hundred acres, belonging to the old servants of the company, Canadians, who [had] settled here; they all [appeared] very comfortable and thriving." Twelve miles above Champoeg dwelt the Catholic priest, Father Blanchet, "settled among his flock, . . . doing great good to the settlers in ministering to their temporal as well as spiritual wants." The traveler passed a few more farms before reaching the first of the buildings belonging to the Methodist mission. Wilkes was entertained by Mr. Abernethy, whose family was one of the four living in the "hospital" erected by Dr. White —"a well-built frame edifice with a double piazza in front, . . . perhaps the best building in Oregon." A ride of five miles brought him to "the mill,"[2] where he found "the air and stir of a new secular settlement; . . . the missionaries [had] made individual selections of lands to the amount of one thousand acres each, in the prospect of the whole country falling under our laws." He was convinced that they were now more interested in building up the country than in laboring further among the few remaining Indians. Neither did they care to leave the

[1] Johnson afterward built the first house in the city of Portland.

[2] This was near the present site of Salem.

Willamette valley in order to find a more hopeful mission field, but preferred to remain here and direct the future development of the new colony they had done so much to create. Among these people Wilkes heard much about a plan to establish a provisional government for Oregon. This he discouraged, believing that there were as yet too few American settlers to make the experiment a success.

Relations with the Hudson's Bay Company

Wilkes found some of his countrymen disposed to complain of the Hudson's Bay Company; but he appears to have given little heed to these mutterings, knowing that there was no serious cause of trouble between the two nationalities. In a very real sense the American settlers were dependent upon the fur company, and owed to it much of the prosperity they enjoyed. McLoughlin generously assisted the newcomers with stock and supplies, advancing in this way large sums in the aggregate; the fort was the regular market for all the wheat and other surplus produce raised in the valley, and its stores furnished all the groceries, clothing, shoes, and other manufactured goods which brought homelike comforts to every little cabin, and luxury to a few of the more pretentious dwellings in the settlement. The fur company, too, was the wall of defense against the Indians of the entire country without which Oregon could not have been settled

when it was by feeble parties of missionaries and others from the United States. It must not be supposed that the British traders neglected to look sharply after their own commercial and national interests; but these were not often directly opposed to the interests of the settlers. Moreover, the officers of the company in Oregon — McLoughlin, Douglas, Ogden, and most of the others — were liberal and humane men, inclined to deal fairly with the Americans who had at least as good a right as themselves to be in the country.[1] Therefore, in summing up the causes bringing about the colonization of the Pacific Northwest we must not omit to mention the presence on the Columbia of the great British trading establishment, which in most respects served the purpose of protection and help to settlers as well as an American fort could have done.

Dr. White's company of 120 settlers, 1842

The year after Wilkes's visit, Oregon received the first considerable party of the emigrants coming from the United States by the overland route. Dr. Elijah White, who had arrived in the country in 1837, returned to the East by sea in 1840. Soon after this the government began to think of sending an Indian

[1] They must have known, also, that if serious offense had been given to the American government in the ill treatment of their citizens in Oregon, the government of Great Britain would be placed at a disadvantage in the contest for territory in Oregon.

agent to Oregon, and early in the year 1842 White was appointed to this position, with instructions to take out as many emigrants as could be got together in the West. White delivered lectures in various places, interviewed pioneers in Missouri and elsewhere, and soon had a company of about one hundred and twenty men, who started from Independence, Missouri, in May, and made a successful journey across the mountains. The party took wagons as far as Fort Hall, using pack horses from this place to the Columbia.[1]

The Ashburton Treaty, 1842

While this company was on its way across the plains, Lord Ashburton and Daniel Webster were discussing at Washington all the questions remaining unsettled between the United States and Great Britain; and on the 9th of August, they signed what is called the Ashburton Treaty. Americans had hoped that the Oregon question might be settled at this time; but in the negotiations it was soon found that Great Britain was not yet prepared to make concessions, and the treaty omitted all mention of the matter.

[1] About the same time the government sent out Lieutenant John C. Frémont to explore a route into the Rocky Mountains. This was the first of his "path-finding" expeditions.

CHAPTER XII

THE GREAT MIGRATION

The Oregon situation in 1842

MANY people were grievously disappointed at the outcome of the Webster-Ashburton negotiation, because of the silence of the treaty concerning Oregon. Yet, looking back from this distance, it is difficult to see how any serious evil could result from a further delay in settling the question. It had already waited a quarter of a century, during most of which time Americans had no interests in the region west of the Rockies. Now they not only had the beginnings of an actual settlement in the Willamette valley, but everything foreshadowed such a large emigration to the Columbia that our position would soon be much stronger than that of our adversary. The situation was a little like that on the Mississippi prior to the Louisiana Purchase; and just as Jefferson wanted time to plant strong American communities on the banks of this river before forcing an issue with France, so far-sighted statesmen of forty years later were glad to see the pioneers preparing for the journey to

Oregon, because this would strengthen the American claim as against Great Britain.[1]

The prospect for emigration in 1843. White's letter

Certainly at the time the Ashburton Treaty was signed American prospects were brightening. In the same month (August, 1842), Dr. White wrote a letter from the mountains in which he assured the frontiersmen that the Oregon colony would prove successful, that his company would reach the Willamette in safety, and that a good pilot[2] could be procured to bring out a company the following spring.

Other causes; the Oregon country

This was doubtless one of the causes inducing the pioneers to prepare for the overland march in 1843. But there were many others. The long agitation in Congress, reports, speeches, newspaper articles, and letters had given the pioneering class considerable information about the Oregon country. They knew that the Willamette valley was a favored land for the farmer and stockman, possessing a rich soil, mild cli-

[1] President Tyler, writing three years later (October 7, 1845) to Mr. Calhoun, says that he hesitated to take up the Oregon negotiation after the treaty of 1842, "believing that under the convention of joint occupation we stood on the most favorable footing. Our population was already finding its way to the shores of the Pacific, and a few years would see an American Settlement on the Columbia sufficiently strong to defend itself and to protect the rights of the U. States to the territory."

[2] This term, ordinarily used to designate a person who steers ships, or directs their course especially into harbors, was commonly employed sixty years ago by travelers in the Rocky Mountains as an equivalent for the term "guide."

mate, and such a combination of prairie and forest, with springs of pure water everywhere, as would make the opening of new farms peculiarly easy and pleasant. In the western states, the settlers had suffered much for the lack of easy transportation, their crops bringing scarcely enough to pay for the labor expended upon them; but in Oregon they would have a navigable river at their doors, and the ocean but a short distance away. The market for grain was said to be good, cattle were reported to be worth four times what they were bringing in western Missouri, and in each case the cost of production was very much less. Oregon, also, had other resources, aside from these exceptional agricultural advantages. Her streams were full of the finest salmon, which might be packed and shipped at a good profit; splendid forests of fir and pine, extending down to the water's edge, invited the establishment of lumber mills; and unlimited water power was at hand for all manufacturing purposes. Such a combination of elements, the pioneers thought, would insure the development of a prosperous state on the shores of the Pacific.

"Hard times," slavery, the spirit of adventure, patriotism

For several years, the western people had experienced continuous "hard times," with low prices for everything they had to sell, and almost no opportunity to improve their condition either in farming or other business. The

spirit of unrest on these accounts was widespread. Moreover, many persons in the southwestern states were beginning to feel very keenly the evils of slavery, which was causing violent agitation throughout the country, and were anxious to remove their families beyond the reach of its influence. But underneath all other motives was a distinctly American love of adventure, the product of generations of pioneering. It was the spirit of the frontiersmen of the olden time: the longing to open new "trails," to subdue strange lands, and make new settlements. True, men had abundant opportunity to "move" without crossing the western mountains. They might go from Ohio to Michigan, Wisconsin, or Iowa; from Kentucky to western Missouri, Arkansas, or Texas. But, while thousands were each year doing this, such migrations after all were hardly satisfying to those remembering the deeds of pioneer ancestors who had traversed the "Wilderness Road" into Kentucky, and settled in a wild region amid constant dangers and alarms from hostile savages. The stories of Boone, Kenton, Clark, and scores of others were still recited around frontier firesides by old men and women who spoke out of their own vivid recollections of these border heroes. Such tales fired the imaginations of the young, and prepared a generation of men for a new

feat of pioneering, more arduous in some respects than that of seventy years before. And what an alluring prospect was theirs! A

SWEETWATER GAP, ON THE OREGON TRAIL.

journey of two thousand miles through an uninhabited wilderness; the crossing of a vaster system of mountains than any of which the fathers knew; majestic snow peaks, deep, dark cañons through which the rivers rushed and

roared in their headlong progress toward the west; tedious stretches of barren plain; valleys of enchanting loveliness; and at last the noble river and the great, strange, inspiring sea! Add to all this the belief, which many held, that their going to Oregon would benefit the United States in its contest with Great Britain over territorial rights, and we have a combination of motives powerful enough to set hundreds of pioneers in motion.

Collecting the companies

The approach of spring (1843) found numbers of men in various sections of the country preparing for the march. The companies had been organizing for many months. Correspondence committees in western Missouri received names of intending emigrants as early as September, 1842. An emigration agent from St. Louis, Mr. J. M. Shivley, spent the winter in Washington, kept the people of the West informed as to the progress of legislation respecting Oregon, and tried to induce the Secretary of War to provide a company of troops to escort the emigrants. Senator Linn once more brought up his bill for the establishment of a territorial government and the granting of lands to settlers. It passed the Senate on the 3d of February by the close vote of twenty-four to twenty-two. Although afterward killed in the House of Representatives, the enthusiasm and hope aroused by the passage of the bill through

the Senate had much to do with starting new recruits to the place of rendezvous. So did, also, the public meetings held in various places, like Columbus and Chillicothe, Ohio, and Springfield, Illinois, to discuss the Oregon question and to adopt resolutions urging Congress to pass the Linn bill. A few men of large influence in the western communities had decided to emigrate, and they undertook to persuade others by means of newspaper articles, personal interviews, and public addresses. In Bloomington, Iowa, the entire population appears to have been affected by what men called the "Oregon fever"; they held several public meetings, organized an emigrating party, adopted rules concerning equipment, the route to be taken, and other details of preparation for the journey.

Organizing for the march

Independence, Missouri, had for some years been the general outfitting place for companies of traders, trappers, and emigrants going to the far West. The village lay a few miles from the Missouri River, near the present site of Kansas City, and was the radiating point for many wilderness highways, including the great Santa Fé and Oregon "trails." All the small parties from Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, Indiana, Illinois, and Iowa, as well as those from Missouri, gathered at this place. By the middle of May many had arrived, driving in from

all directions two, three, a dozen or twenty wagons at a time, with loose stock following behind the train. They now made arrangements for the start, adopting a body of rules, and choosing a pilot to conduct them through the mountains. The pioneers were then ready to move forward.

Peter H. Burnett; the start; Elm Grove

Probably the leading man of this emigration was Peter H. Burnett, a young lawyer from Platte County, Missouri, who had done much to get the company together. He kept a diary during the course of the journey, and on reaching the Willamette wrote a number of letters for the New York *Herald*, giving an account of the trip. Looking back from his far western home to the time of beginning their march from Missouri, and realizing both its difficulties and the significance of what had been done, he says: "On the 22d of May we began one of the most arduous and important trips undertaken in modern times." The first camp, at Elm Grove, on account of its strange picturesqueness, produced a strong impression upon the mind of Burnett, as it probably did on others. "I have never witnessed a scene," he says, "more beautiful than this. Elm Grove stands in a wide, gently undulating prairie. The moon shed her silvery beams on the white sheets of sixty wagons; a thousand head of cattle grazed upon the surrounding plain; fifty

campfires sent up their brilliant flames, and the sound of the sweet violin was heard in the tents. All was stir and excitement."

Electing officers; division of the company

By the time they had crossed the Kansas River (June 1) a good many others had joined the company, which now numbered one hundred and twenty wagons, nearly one thousand persons of all ages, and more than five times as many animals. Stopping to complete the organization, Peter H. Burnett was chosen captain, J. W. Nesmith orderly sergeant, and nine others designated to form a council. A few days later, however, Burnett resigned, and the company was divided into two parts. Each division had sixty wagons; but one was composed mainly of those who had few or no loose cattle, and called "the light column"; while the other contained the owners of the herds, large and small, with which this emigration was encumbered, and took the name of "the cow-column." There was a separate captain for each.

"A Day with the Cow-Column," by Captain Jesse Applegate

The leader of the second division was Captain Jesse Applegate, a man whom the people of Oregon delight to honor as one of the noblest of the pioneers. He is remembered as a statesman, a surveyor, a pathfinder through the southern mountains, and in general a leader in all the varied activities of frontier life in the Northwest. But, fortunately, he was also a writer of elegant English prose; and one of the most

delightful productions of his pen is an account which he wrote in 1876 of a typical day on this long march "with the cow-column." Since this essay gives us so lifelike a picture of the great emigration in motion toward the west, and since it describes the camping methods in use for many years among trapping parties and traders, as well as emigrants to Oregon and California, we cannot do better than to transcribe a portion of it.[1]

Daybreak; arousing the camp

"It is four o'clock A.M.; the sentinels on duty have discharged their rifles — the signal that the hours of sleep are over — and every wagon and tent is pouring forth its night tenants, and slow kindling smokes begin largely to rise and float away in the morning air. Sixty men start from the corral, spreading as they make through the vast herd of cattle and horses that make a semicircle around the encampment, the most distant perhaps two miles away.

Corraling the stock

"The herders pass the extreme verge and carefully examine for trails beyond, to see that none of the animals have strayed or been stolen during the night. This morning no trails lead beyond the outside animals in sight,

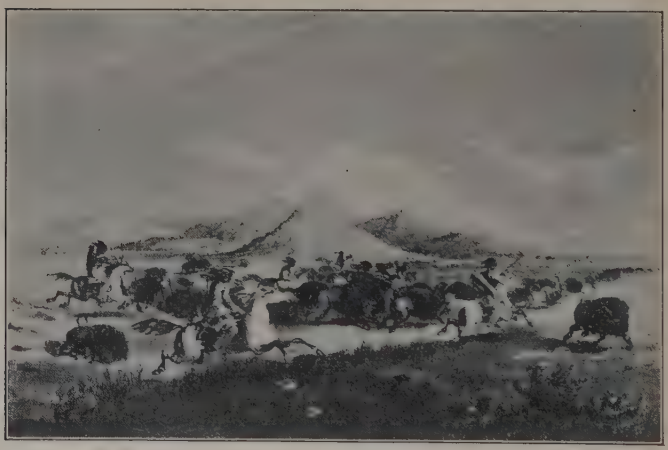
[1] The paper was first read by Mr. Applegate before the Oregon Pioneer Association in 1876, and published in their proceedings; recently it has been reprinted in the Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society (December, 1900).

and by five o'clock the herders begin to contract the great moving circle, and the well-trained animals move slowly towards camp, clipping here and there a thistle or a tempting bunch of grass on the way. In about an hour five thousand animals are close up to the encampment, and the teamsters are busy selecting their teams and driving them inside the corral to be yoked. The corral is a circle one hundred yards deep, formed with wagons connected strongly with each other; the wagon in the rear being connected with the wagon in front by its tongue and ox chains. It is a strong barrier that the most vicious ox cannot break, and in case of attack from the Sioux would be no contemptible intrenchment.

Getting ready for the day's march

"From six to seven o'clock is a busy time; breakfast is to be eaten, the tents struck, the wagons loaded and the teams yoked and brought up in readiness to be attached to their respective wagons. All know when, at seven o'clock, the signal to march sounds, that those not ready to take their places in the line of march must fall into the dusty rear for the day. There are sixty wagons. They have been divided into fifteen divisions or platoons of four wagons each, and each platoon is entitled to lead in its turn. The leading platoon to-day will be the rear one to-morrow, and will bring up the rear unless some teamster through in-

dolence or neligence has lost his place in the line, and is condemned to that uncomfortable post. It is within ten minutes of seven; the corral but now a strong barricade is everywhere broken, the teams being attached to the wagons. The women and children have taken their places in them. The pilot (a borderer



A Buffalo Hunt.

who has passed his life on the verge of civilization and has been chosen to his post of leader from his knowledge of the savage and his experience in travel through roadless wastes) stands ready, in the midst of his pioneers and aids, to mount and lead the way. Ten or fifteen young men, not to-day on duty, form another cluster. They are ready to start on a buffalo hunt, are well mounted and well armed,

as they need to be, for the unfriendly Sioux have driven the buffalo out of the Platte, and the hunters must ride fifteen or twenty miles to find them. The cow drivers are hastening, as they get ready, to the rear of their charge, to collect and prepare them for the day's march.

Breaking camp; forward along the trail

"It is on the stroke of seven; the rush to and fro, the cracking of whips, the loud command to oxen, and what seemed to be the inextricable confusion of the last ten minutes has ceased. Fortunately every one has been found and every teamster is at his post. The clear notes of a trumpet sound in the front; the pilot and his guards mount their horses; the leading divisions of the wagons move out of the encampment, and take up the line of march; the rest fall into their places with the precision of clockwork, until the spot so lately full of life sinks back into that solitude that seems to reign over the broad plain and rushing river as the caravan draws its lazy length towards the distant El Dorado. . . .

The nooning

"The pilot, by measuring the ground and timing the speed of the horses, has determined the rate of each, so as to enable him to select the nooning place as nearly as the requisite grass and water can be had at the end of five hours' travel of the wagons. To-day, the ground being favorable, little time has been lost in preparing the road, so that he and his pioneers

are at the nooning place an hour in advance of the wagons, which time is spent in preparing convenient watering places for the animals, and digging little wells near the bank of the Platte. As the teams are not unyoked, but simply turned loose from the wagons, a corral is not formed at noon, but the wagons are drawn up in columns, four abreast, the leading wagon of each platoon on the left, the platoons being formed with that in view. This brings friends together at noon as well as at night.

Session of the "council"

"To-day an extra session of the council is being held, to settle a dispute that does not admit of delay, between a proprietor and a young man who has undertaken to do a man's service on the journey for bed and board. Many such cases exist, and much interest is taken in the manner in which this high court, from which there is no appeal, will define the rights of each party in such engagements. The council was a high court in the most exalted sense. It was a senate composed of the ablest and most respected fathers of the emigration. It exercised both legislative and judicial powers, and its laws and decisions proved equal, and worthy of the high trust reposed in it. . . .

The drowsy afternoon

"It is now one o'clock; the bugle has sounded and the caravan has resumed its westward journey. It is in the same order, but the evening is far less animated than the morning

march. A drowsiness has fallen apparently on man and beast; teamsters drop asleep on their perches, and even when walking by their teams; and the words of command are now addressed to the slowly creeping oxen in the soft tenor of women or the piping treble of children, while the snores of the teamsters make a droning accompaniment. . . .

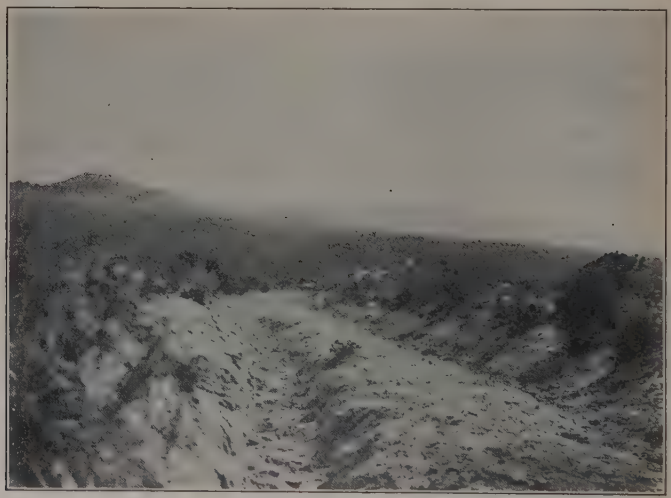
Forming the evening camp; nightfall

"The sun is now getting low in the west, and at length the painstaking pilot is standing ready to conduct the train in the circle which he has previously measured and marked out, which is to form the invariable fortification for the night. The leading wagons follow him so nearly around the circle that but a wagon length separates them. Each wagon follows in its track, the rear closing on the front, until its tongue and ox chains will perfectly reach from one to the other; and so accurate [is] the measure and perfect the practice, that the hindmost wagon of the train always precisely closes the gateway. As each wagon is brought into position it is dropped from its team (the teams being inside the circle), the team is unyoked, and the yoke and chains are used to connect the wagon strongly with that in its front. Within ten minutes from the time the leading wagon halted, the barricade is formed, the teams unyoked and driven out to pasture. Every one is busy preparing fires . . . to cook the evening

meal, pitching tents and otherwise preparing for the night. . . ." The watches "begin at eight o'clock P.M. and end at four o'clock A.M."

Arrival at Fort Hall, August 27

The daily routine, here so graphically described, must have become extremely wearisome to the pioneers and their families after a few months spent upon the dusty, dreary



THE OLD TRAIL ALONG THE SWEETWATER.

"trail." At the end of ninety-eight days, on the 27th of August, the company reached Fort Hall, the trading post built by Wyeth in 1832 and afterward sold to the Hudson's Bay Company, which had become a famous way station on the overland route. They were now on the eastern border of the Oregon country, and two-thirds of the distance to the Willamette had

been traversed. The hardships already endured from storm, flood, and the unavoidable mishaps of the long journey across the plains were very great; yet all were aware that the most difficult portion of the trip was still before them. Thus far the road had been comparatively good; at least, the wagons always had a well-marked trail to follow. But this practically terminated at Fort Hall, which was connected with the lower country only by a pack trail. No loaded wagons had ever passed the fort, and when the pioneers set out from their homes in the spring it was generally understood that the wagon road ended at this place. However, they soon found that it would be impossible to secure enough pack horses to carry their families and property to the Columbia, as the small parties of previous years had done, and so it became necessary to go forward with the wagons at all hazards. The company was large, they could send roadmakers ahead to prepare the way, and might be able to overcome even the worst difficulties by united effort. Besides, they had with them Dr. Whitman of the Walla Walla mission, who had taken his light wagon, without a load, as far as Fort Boise in 1836, and who knew more about the possibility of opening a wagon trail through the region still to be traversed than any of the other men. Whitman felt certain they could succeed, urged the

company to make the venture, and offered to act as guide. His services to the emigrants from Fort Hall westward were very great, and are remembered with gratitude by the early pioneers of the Northwest.[1]

From Fort Hall to Waiilatpu down the Columbia

They left Fort Hall on the 30th of August, passed Fort Boise September 20, and ten

MT. HOOD.

days later came in sight of the Grand Ronde, the famous circular valley of the Blue Mountains. Its peaceful beauties are said to have so impressed the travelers, after the toils and hardships of the days spent in the desert, that

[1] The circumstances inducing Dr. Whitman to make the winter journey from his mission on the Walla Walla to Boston and Washington will be narrated in Chapter XIV.

some broke into tears of joy as they looked down upon it from the high plateau above. Ten days later they reached Whitman's station, where many of them bought supplies of wheat and potatoes for the trip to western Oregon. A portion of the emigrants arranged to leave their cattle in the Walla Walla valley; some drove herds overland; while the families, the wagons, and other property were taken down the Columbia in boats and rafts. By the end of November all had reached the Willamette valley.[1]

[1] Most of the sources from which this account of the great emigration is written were discovered by the writer while searching through files of old newspapers preserved at Madison, Wisconsin, St. Louis and Columbia, Missouri. A portion of the matter thus found has been reprinted in the Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society, where it can be conveniently referred to. The most important single source for the journey is the Burnett *Herald* letters, reprinted in the Quarterly for December, 1902. A series of other short letters appears in the Quarterly for June, 1903, and still others in several recent numbers. The Quarterly, edited by Professor F. G. Young, secretary of the society, was begun in March, 1900, and has now completed the fifth volume. In it has already been gathered a large amount of valuable source material relating to the history of the Northwest, as well as numerous special articles by pioneers and others.

CHAPTER XIII

THE FIRST AMERICAN GOVERNMENT ON THE PACIFIC

Importance of the emigration of 1843

THE emigration whose organization and movements have just been described marks a new starting point in the history of the Northwest. Up to this time we have been dealing with events which may be looked upon as introductory; now we begin actually to see the process of state building on the shores of the Pacific. Just as in Virginia the colony can hardly be said to have been planted prior to the arrival of Delaware's party in 1610; as in Massachusetts it was the great company brought out by Winthrop in 1630 which firmly established the English people, although the beginnings of settlement already existed; so on the Pacific coast the emigration of 1843 closes the period of experiment, and gives us a true, self-supporting American colony. In the present chapter we shall do scarcely more than point out some of the changes produced in Oregon during the succeeding three years as a result of this influx of new people.

The earliest attempts to form a provisional

Beginnings of the agitation for a government

government for the Willamette colony were made several years prior to 1843; but, as we shall see, the organization was not put into effective operation till after the new emigrants arrived.[1] When our people began going to the country there were no American laws to control their actions, and no government whatever except that which was exercised over British subjects by officers of the Hudson's Bay Company. The missionaries in the Willamette valley, and the other settlers who gradually collected there, regarded this as one of their principal grievances, and repeatedly petitioned Congress to extend the laws of the United States over them. But, as we have seen,

GOVERNOR GEORGE ABERNETHY.

[1] In the history of the Northwest the terms "emigrants" and "emigration" have commonly been used instead of "immigrants" and "immigration." The custom will be preserved in these pages.

that body could not be induced to take any action. In 1840, with the arrival of the Lausanne company and the Rocky Mountain trappers of that year, the American party felt greatly strengthened and began to talk of organizing a provisional or temporary government on their own account, in the expectation of giving it up whenever the United States should be prepared to extend its authority over the country. The French settlers, however, being attached to the fur company, remained satisfied with conditions as they were.

The first step toward an organization, 1841

Early in 1841 an incident occurred which brought out sharply the need of some regular authority, and set in motion plans to secure a political organization. Ewing Young, the pioneer stockman of the Willamette valley, whose connection with the cattle company has already been described, had, in the course of nine years' residence in the country, become possessed of a large herd of cattle and considerable other property. In February of this year he died, without making any provision by will for the disposition of his estate, and so far as known leaving no heir. His neighbors were naturally very much interested in the case, and it is claimed that those who gathered at Young's funeral issued a call for a general meeting to consider what was to be done with this property. On the 17th of February, when the

public meeting occurred, resolutions were offered providing for a committee to draft a constitution and laws. This body was selected on the 18th, and besides the settlers chose Dr. Ira L. Babcock of the Methodist mission to be supreme judge with probate powers. They provided also for a clerk of courts and recorder, a high sheriff, and three constables. The meeting then adjourned to the second Tuesday in June. Dr. Babcock, on the 15th of April, appointed an administrator for Ewing Young's property, this being, it is believed, the first official act of the Oregon provisional government.

The plan miscarries

When the June meeting took place it was found that the committee appointed to draft a constitution and laws had done nothing, not even so much as to meet for consultation. The reason was plain enough. In their anxiety to gain the support of the French settlers the missionary party, which controlled the earlier meetings, had succeeded in making the French priest, Father Blanchet, chairman of the committee. But he refused to take any interest in the matter and failed to call the committee together. Blanchet now resigned, and his place being filled by an American it seemed that something would probably be done. The committee was instructed to meet on a particular day and report to a meeting of the settlers set for October. But now a new obstacle appeared

in the person of Lieutenant Wilkes, who showed himself decidedly opposed to the plan of a provisional government. The result was that the whole matter was dropped for more than a year.

The question resumed in 1843; the "wolf meeting"

In the fall of 1842 Dr. White arrived as Indian agent, bringing his company of one hundred and twenty new settlers. Although the French party had also been strengthened, it now appeared to some of the Americans that the time for action had come. The matter was discussed during the winter, and with the approach of spring a favorable opportunity arose to secure a public meeting. The settlers' herds had suffered much from the ravages of wild beasts, an evil which called for some means of exterminating the forest foes. On the 2d of February, 1843, a group of persons gathered at the Oregon Institute appointed a committee to "notify a general meeting," which was held on the second Monday of March. The committee was prepared with resolutions advising that bounties be paid for killing wolves, lynxes, bears, and panthers; that a subscription fund be raised for that purpose; and that officers be appointed to manage the business. These being adopted, the more important and interesting resolution was offered, "That a committee [of twelve] be appointed to take into consideration the propriety of taking steps for the civil and military protection of the

colony."[1] This also received a favorable vote, and now the plan to create a provisional government was fully launched.

The provisional government voted at Champoeg, May 2, 1843

Only two months were allowed to intervene between the appointment of the committee and the meeting to consider its report. It was a time of great political activity in the settlement. The French people were still generally

MOUNT RAINIER FROM THE SOUTH.

opposed to the scheme, as they declared in a formal address to the colonists prepared about this time, and many of the Americans were far from enthusiastic. There was much uncertainty in the minds of the settlers as they

[1] This resolution was proposed by Mr. W. H. Gray, who was then living in the Willamette valley, and who bore a prominent part in the affairs of the colony at this time.

gathered at Champoeg on the 2d of May. The committee, however, reported in favor of establishing a government. When a motion was made to adopt this report, the vote was very close and some one called for a division of the house. At this point arose the stalwart figure of "Joe" Meek, one of the most picturesque of the "mountain men," and a person of considerable influence among certain classes in the community. Stepping out grandly in front of the crowd of excited men he shouted: "Who's for a divide? All in favor of the report and of an organization, follow me." The count was made, we are told, after half an hour of the greatest confusion, and resulted in fifty-two (52) votes in favor of and fifty (50) against the resolution. So the project to organize a provisional government was carried.

Election of officers; the July meeting

The officers recommended by the committee were chosen before the adjournment. They were a supreme judge, a clerk and recorder, a high sheriff (Joe Meek was very properly elected to this post), three magistrates, three constables, a major and three captains of militia. A legislative committee composed of nine members was also chosen at this meeting, and instructed to report a code of laws to be voted on by the people July 5. The pioneers who gathered at Champoeg to hear a 4th of July address by Rev. Gustavus Hines remained over

to the next day and ratified the provisions of the so-called First Organic Law.[1]

A government by "compact"

"We the people of Oregon Territory," so the preamble of this famous document recites, "for purposes of mutual protection, and to secure peace and prosperity among ourselves, agree to adopt the following laws and regulations until such time as the United States of America extend their jurisdiction over us." Here we have the well-known American method of forming a government by "compact," or agreement. Two hundred and twenty-three years earlier, when the Pilgrim Fathers met to draw up their "Mayflower Compact," this principle was employed for the first time in American history, and soon afterward the early colonists of Connecticut followed it in their "Fundamental Orders." When, at a later time, American pioneers crossed the Alleghanies to eastern Tennessee, and found themselves beyond the jurisdiction of any seaboard state, they formed the "Watauga Association." Similar pioneer governments were created in Kentucky, on the Cumberland River, and elsewhere.[2]

[1] This document, as well as the provisional constitution of 1845, may be conveniently found in Strong and Schafer's "Government of the American People," Oregon edition, Boston, 1901, Appendix.

[2] The people of Vermont, for example, had a government of their own, created by compact or agreement among themselves, for fourteen years before the state was admitted to the Union.

The Willamette settlers were following in the footsteps of their ancestors.

The emigration of 1843 saves the provisional government

The work of the pioneers at Champoeg was of very great importance in the history of Oregon and the Pacific coast; for it called the attention of men everywhere to the American colony in this region; it quickened the interest of the United States government; and announced to Great Britain that her subjects were no longer completely dominant in the Pacific Northwest. Yet, while the Americans then in the country deserve great credit for taking the first steps, these results were largely due to the appearance of the great emigration in the fall. It changed the small American majority into an overwhelming one; provided able political leaders, like Burnett, Applegate, McCarver, Nesmith, Waldo, and Lovejoy; increased the property of the country; and gave a feeling of security and stability which only numbers can impart.

Governmental improvements made in 1844–1845

The government as adopted in July, 1843, while probably the best that could then be secured, was in some respects very weak. Instead of a governor there was to be an executive committee of three. The land law, which was of greater interest to most of the settlers than any other feature, was especially defective, because it allowed the Catholic and Protestant missions to claim each an entire township, aside

from the land their members held as individual settlers. Lastly, there was no way to raise money for the support of the government except by private contributions, a thoroughly inefficient and always disappointing method. The legislative committee of 1844, made up mainly of the newcomers, revised the entire system, providing for a governor, a house of representatives, a more satisfactory judiciary, a new land law permitting none but actual settlers to hold claims, and above all a means of raising taxes to support the government. This last was the keystone of their political arch, as the leaders well knew, and they were wise enough to fit it exactly to its purpose. The law required that every settler's property should be assessed according to regular rates, and in case any one refused to pay the tax apportioned to him, he was to lose the right to vote and all other benefits of the government. If his claim were jumped, the court could not relieve him; if a thief were to drive off his cattle or slaughter them in the pasture, the sheriff and the constables would turn a deaf ear to his appeal for help. He would become an outlaw.

Success of the provisional government

In these ways the provisional government was completed. The new scheme was adopted by a large majority on the 26th of July, 1845, and Oregon at last had a constitution similar

in most respects to that of an ordinary state. It was a good government, — firm, just, and effective in all its departments. The settlers supposed it was to last only a few months, believing the United States was about to take control of the country; but in fact this event did not occur till nearly four years later. In the meantime there was no reasonable cause of complaint against the government maintained by the sturdy, sober, order-loving pioneers themselves.

Effect of the great migration on later emigrations

While these political matters were being settled, western Oregon was filling up with new people whose coming was due very largely to the success of the 1843 emigration. When that company started, many thousands of people followed their movements with anxiety, not a few regarded them as foolish adventurers, and Horace Greeley declared: "This emigration of more than a thousand persons in one body to Oregon wears an aspect of insanity."[1] When they reached the Columbia in safety, proving that loaded wagons could be taken through without serious difficulty, a great change in-

[1] New York *Tribune*, July 22, 1843. He feared that their provisions would give out, their stock perish for want of grass and water, their children and women starve. "For what," exclaimed Mr. Greeley, "do they brave the desert, the wilderness, the savage, the snowy precipices of the Rocky Mountains, the weary summer march, the storm-drenched bivouac and the gnawings of famine?"

stantly came over the thought of the country with respect to Oregon. It was a startling thing to eastern people to be told, by a man who had made the trip, "You can move here [from Missouri] with less expense than you could to Tennessee or Kentucky." Moreover, many prominent pioneers wrote home giving favorable accounts of the country. Burnett said, "If man cannot supply all his wants here, he cannot anywhere." Another declared: "The prospect is quite good for a young man to make a fortune in this country, as all kinds of produce are high and likely to remain so from the extensive demand. The Russian settlements in Asia [Alaska?], the Sandwich Islands, a great portion of California, and the whaling vessels of the Northwest coast procure their supplies from this place." McCarver found "the soil of this valley . . . equal to that of Iowa or any other portion of the United States; . . ." and T. B. Wood wrote, "The prairies of this region are . . . equal to any in Missouri or Illinois." Such letters were commonly printed, first in the local paper of some western town, then in the more widely read journals of the country, with the result that Oregon took its place in the popular mind by the side of Wisconsin, Iowa, and Texas, as a territory possessing attractions for the home seeker.

The emigrating company of 1844 numbered

The emigration of 1844

about fourteen hundred. The parties reached the Missouri frontier early in the spring and set out in good time. But the wetness of the season caused many delays, so that they reached the western slope very late, and mostly in want of provisions. A small party was hurried forward to bring supplies from the Willamette valley, some bought food of the missionaries on the Walla Walla, and even of the Indians, and finally, late in the fall, most of them reached their destination in a sorry state. The rains having already set in, there was no chance to provide proper shelter, and many suffered great inconvenience, if not actual hardship. The earlier settlers were forced to listen to a good deal of repining from the newcomers; but, as one of them wrote, this "only lasted during the winter. In the spring, when the clouds cleared away, and the grass and flowers sprang up beneath the kindling rays of a bright Oregon sun, their spirits revived with reviving nature, and by the succeeding fall they had themselves become old settlers, and formed a part of us, their views and feelings, in the meantime, having undergone a total change."[1]

In the year 1845 Oregon received the largest

[1] Quoted from Burnett's "Recollections of an Old Pioneer," New York, 1880. The portion of this book relating to Oregon, which contains a large amount of valuable matter on early conditions, the emigration of 1843, etc., has been reprinted in the Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society, Vol. V.

of the early emigrations, a body of nearly three thousand people. They started, not in a single caravan like the earlier parties, but in companies of fifty, seventy-five, a hundred, or two hundred wagons. All went well till after they passed Fort Boise, where the emigrants encountered Stephen H. L. Meek, who offered to guide them over a trail by way of the Malheur River, said to be much shorter than that commonly used.[1] Unfortunately, about one hundred and fifty wagons followed him into the most barren and desolate country that eastern Oregon contains, and where as it proved there was no road except an old pack trail. Stock perished, food gave out, the emigrants became desperate in their anxiety to find water. When they reached a little oasis in the desert, they formed a camp, while mounted men to the number of one hundred scoured the country in every direction for water, only to return at nightfall without finding it. This was continued for several days in succession. Meantime the children and the weaker adults were falling sick, and many of them were dying. In the midst of this despair a galloping horseman brought the glad news of the discovery of water. The hated guide had found it. Grief was now turned to joy; loud shouts rang out; there was laughing and clapping of hands. But some

The emigration of 1845; horrors of Meek's "cut-off"

[1] Sixty wagons had turned off at Fort Hall to go to California.

stood reverently silent, with bowed heads and eyes brimming over with tears of thankfulness. The stream found proved to be a branch of the Des Chutes River, along the course of which the travelers passed down to the Dalles, whence a few days brought them to the Willamette. They had suffered the most terrible agony on the route, wasted forty days of precious time, and worse than all, lost about seventy-five of their number.[1] Those emigrants who followed the customary route entered the valley at the usual time without serious mishap.

Population of Oregon; its distribution

The population of Oregon, which was doubled by the arrival of the emigrants of 1845, now numbered about six thousand, settled in five counties, of which all but one were in the Willamette valley. They were Yamhill, Clackamas, Tualatin, Champoeg, and Clatsop. In the election of 1845 the total vote for governor was five hundred and four. The following year it was more than doubled, and a new county, Polk, had been added to the list of those lying south of the Columbia, while there was now also a county, named Columbia, north of the river.

Origin of the Puget Sound settlement

The new northern county has its explanation partly in the fact that a few Americans were by this time settled on the waters of Puget Sound. When the colonists first began coming to Ore-

[1] The names of thirty-four, nearly all adults, were printed in the eastern papers of the next year.

gon they were usually dependent on the Hudson's Bay Company for supplies, stock, tools, and in general everything necessary to start them in farming. McLoughlin, believing that Great Britain would at last come into possession of the region north of the Columbia, tried to prevent American settlers from taking claims on that side of the river, directing them all to the Willamette. For a time this plan worked well, but when the best lands of the valley were all taken up, and Americans became so numerous in the country as to feel somewhat independent of the fur company, a few pioneers began to think of taking claims north of the river. Of the party which arrived in the fall of 1844 a few men, under the lead of M. T. Simmons, tried to reach Puget Sound overland, but failing, returned to the neighborhood of Vancouver, where they spent the winter. The following summer Simmons started out once more, with six companions, made his way up the Cowlitz to the head of navigation, and then westward to the lower end of the Sound. One of their fellow-emigrants of the previous year, John R. Jackson, was already established in a cabin on the highland north of the Cowlitz, and the pioneers also saw the large farm opened some years before by the Puget Sound Agricultural Company, a branch of the fur company. They were delighted with the prospects of the Puget Sound

country, with its splendid opportunities for commerce and manufactories; and returning for his family, Simmons settled, in October, on a claim near the site of Olympia. Four other families and two single men took claims in the same neighborhood, and thus was the foundation laid for a new community in the north.

The Hudson's Bay Company accepts the protection of the provisional government

While these sturdy frontiersmen were hewing a road through the jungle north of Cowlitz Landing, the settlers in the Willamette were winning their greatest political victory by inducing the officers of the fur company to bring themselves, their people, and all the property of the organization under the protection of the provisional government. This was achieved on the 15th of August. The monopoly, which had dominated the affairs of the Northwest for a quarter of a century, had at last sunk to a subordinate position; and the Oregon question, so far as control of the country itself was concerned, had been settled by the pioneers.[1]

[1] McLoughlin made a special arrangement with the officers of the government, whereby the company was to be taxed only on the merchandise which it sold to settlers. Jesse Applegate is the man who negotiated this important agreement.

CHAPTER XIV

THE OPENING OF A NEW ERA

How the settlement of Oregon affected the Oregon question

THE change which had occurred in the relations between Americans and Englishmen in Oregon no doubt had its effect upon the British government at home. So long as the Hudson's Bay Company was in control west of the Rockies, there was every reason, from their point of view, to continue the principle of "joint occupation." But the tables had at last been turned: American settlers were in full possession of the region south of the Columbia, and were even beginning to open the forests north of the river. It must have been clear to Great Britain for these reasons that further delay in settling the Oregon question would be wholly to her disadvantage.

The Oregon convention at Cincinnati, July, 1843

In the United States a remarkable agitation had begun in the spring of 1843. It was due in part to the failure of Linn's bill, and in part to a rumor that the government at Washington was willing to give up the region north of the Columbia to Great Britain if she would persuade Mexico to sell us northern California. Many local meetings were held in various parts of the

Mississippi valley, and these resulted in the calling of an Oregon convention at Cincinnati in July, 1843.[1] Nearly one hundred delegates were in attendance, and not only the Mississippi valley, but the entire country was interested in their proceedings.

Origin of the demand for 54° 40′ as the northern boundary

This convention adopted resolutions declaring that the United States had an undoubted right to the country west of the Rocky Mountains between the parallel of 42° on the south and 54° 40′ on the north. In other words, the line established in 1824 to separate American interests from those of Russia was regarded as the rightful northern boundary of the United States in the Pacific Northwest. This would have shut Great Britain out from the territory west of the Rockies, notwithstanding the explorations of her Mackenzies, her Thompsons, Cooks, and Vancouvers; and would have left no beaver ground on the Pacific slope for her traders, who had controlled the commerce of that region for thirty years.

"Fifty-four forty or fight"

This was claiming too much for the United States. But there was some slight ground for it, and besides many Americans were out of patience with Great Britain for refusing to

[1] The idea of a Mississippi valley convention to consider the Oregon question originated at Columbus, Ohio. The Ohio *Statesman* for this period is the best source of information on the entire movement. Its files were consulted in the library of the Wisconsin Historical Society at Madison.

accept the compromise line of 49° so often offered. They therefore took up the idea of the more northerly boundary, and insisted that the country must go to war with our adversary rather than abandon any part of the "Oregon country." The next year (1844), when the Democratic convention met and nominated James K. Polk for the presidency, the western delegates succeeded in making the Oregon question a part of their platform; and so it came about that the entire country was treated to the strange campaign cry of "Fifty-four forty or fight," which probably helped somewhat to win the election for Mr. Polk.

The Oregon question settled

After the failure to provide for the northwestern boundary in the Ashburton Treaty, President Tyler had begun other negotiations with the British government, but always in vain. On the 4th of March, 1845, he went out of office with, as he wrote, the "one wish remaining unfilled," that he could have settled the Oregon question. President Polk at once took it up, declared in his inaugural address that our claim to the Oregon country was undoubtedly just, and soon entered into a new correspondence with Great Britain. In spite of the Democratic platform and campaign utterances, he again offered to compromise on the 49th parallel. When the British minister refused to accept the offer, Mr. Polk withdrew it,

indicating that no further concession could be expected from the United States. Later in the year he asked Congress for authority to put an end to the treaty of joint occupation. This was granted; but many prominent members like John C. Calhoun, fearful that these steps might lead to war, urged the President to give Great Britain an opportunity to make some offer on her part, which he consented to do. The tardy concession came at last, June, 1846, in the shape of an offer from the British government to settle the long dispute by taking the 49th parallel as the boundary. The President submitted the question to the Senate, which advised him to accept, and on the 15th of June the treaty was signed. The Oregon question was now settled, and that in a way which was perfectly fair to all parties concerned.

Oregon to wait for a territorial government

Before the close of the year (December 3) the people of Oregon learned of the signing of the treaty with Great Britain, and supposed that the United States would at the next session of Congress establish a territorial government over them. This, indeed, was the desire of the President, and a bill for the purpose actually passed the House of Representatives, but could make no progress in the Senate. The reason was not far to seek. In drawing up the constitution for their provisional government the pioneers inserted the famous

clause from the Ordinance of 1787, declaring that "neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime," should ever be permitted in the territory. This was made a part of the Oregon bill presented by Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois, and very naturally called out the opposition of strong proslavery leaders like Calhoun.

President Polk and Senator Benton encourage the Oregon people

So the congressional session of 1846–1847 closed with no provision for Oregon. The President felt a deep interest in this far western settlement, and caused Secretary of State Buchanan to write a letter to the Oregon people encouraging them to expect favorable action at the next session of Congress (1847–1848), which was already at hand when the letter reached the Pacific. Buchanan made no clear statement of the reason for the failure of the Douglas bill. At about the same time, however, a letter was received in Oregon from Senator Thomas H. Benton, who threw the blame upon Calhoun, but declared: "You will not be outlawed for not admitting slavery. . . . I promise you this in the name of the South, as well as of the North." . . .

Congress again asked to pass a bill; startling news from Oregon

It was something to know that the leaders at the national capital still remembered them; yet the pioneers had been patient for a long time, waiting for the government to give them some sort of recognition; and now that the

quarrel with Great Britain was closed, it was hard for them to understand why action should be longer delayed. President Polk was as good as his word, recommending strongly to the next Congress the passage of an Oregon bill. But the opposition was at work once more, as in the previous year, and might have been equally successful but for a piece of startling news carried across the mountains during the winter that roused public feeling in favor of Oregon, and practically forced Congress to act. This was the report of the Whitman massacre, into the causes and the history of which we must now inquire.

The up-river missions and their problems

The missions planted on the upper Columbia by Dr. Whitman and his associates in 1836 and the years following were influenced very little by the colonizing movement described in the preceding chapters. Their location on the broad interior plains prevented them from quickly becoming centers of extensive settlements like the Willamette mission, so favorably located near the coast. Therefore, while western Oregon had been growing into a state, the up-river missionaries were laboring faithfully to teach the elements of civilization to a horde of barbarous natives. For a few years their success was sufficient to bring considerable encouragement. But, as the novelty of the new life and teaching wore off, the interest also slackened; Catholic

priests came into the country, teaching by different methods from those used by the Protestants, and this tended to disturb the relations between the missionaries and their wards; worse than all, a number of dissipated, renegade Americans wandered among the tribes, doing all the mischief in their power.

Action of the American board closing the southern missions

At last discouragements mounted to such a height that the American board at Boston, regarding the work in Oregon as almost a complete failure, passed a resolution to close the missions at Waiilatpu and Lapwai, retaining only the one in the north.[1] News of this action reached Dr. Whitman in the fall of 1842. A meeting of the missionaries was at once called, and an agreement reached that the missions should not be given up. Moreover, Dr. Whitman asked and received permission from the assembly to return to the East and lay the whole matter before the board in person.

Whitman's famous winter ride, October to April, 1842–1843

Whitman left his station on the Walla Walla October 3, 1842, with a single white companion, Mr. A. L. Lovejoy, expecting to cross the mountains before the snows of winter arrived. This he might readily have accomplished had all gone well; but on reaching Fort Hall he learned that the Indians were likely to arrest

[1] This action was probably due to exaggerated reports of the difficulties in Oregon written by one or two men formerly connected with the missions.

his progress if he should continue by the direct road, and therefore he turned south, making the long detour by Taos and Bent's Fort. On this journey winter overtook the travelers, violent storms and deep snows impeded their march; while the biting cold, exposure, and lack of proper food would have destroyed any but the most hardy pioneers. At last, early in January, they reached Bent's Fort, where Lovejoy remained till the following summer, while Whitman pushed on to St. Louis and thence to Boston and Washington.

Whitman in the East

We are fortunate in having two accounts of this intrepid missionary when he reached the Atlantic coast.[1] He wore his wilderness garb — fur cap, buckskin trousers, and all — to the city of New York and into the office of the great editor, Horace Greeley, who described him, referring to his clothing, as "the roughest man we have seen this many a day." Again, on board the steamboat *Narragansett*, going from New York to Boston, he impressed a traveler as one of the strangest figures that had "ever passed through the Sound since the days of steam navigation"; yet, "that he was every inch a man and no common one was

[1] One is Horace Greeley's editorial, in the New York *Tribune* (daily) of March 29, 1843; the other a letter to the New York *Spectator*, published April 5, 1843. Both are reprinted in the Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society for June, 1903.

clear." At Boston he succeeded in getting the board to withdraw its order to abandon the missions. He wished them to send out a few good families to settle about the stations as supports to the missionaries. At Washington he urged the Secretary of War to establish along the Oregon trail a line of forts and farming stations, which might serve as a protection against the Indians and also furnish emigrants with needed supplies. By the middle of May he was back at Independence, ready to take up the line of march with the great company gathering there. We have already spoken of his important services on the route.

Decline of the missions, 1843–1847

Although the Indians welcomed Whitman back in the fall of 1843, with every indication of pleasure at his safe return, yet from this time the missionaries gradually lost their power over the surrounding peoples.[1] Their

[1] Mr. Spalding, indeed, wrote in June, 1843, that "the cause of religion and of civilization has steadily advanced among this people from the beginning." He declared that at his station twelve Indians were members of the church, and more than fifty had been received on probation; the school, which was exceptionally prosperous, had increased from one hundred to two hundred and thirty-four, chiefs and other great men as well as the children learning to read and to print. Sixty families had each raised over one hundred bushels of grain, and the herds were increasing rapidly. There is scarcely a doubt, however, that so far as the school was concerned, and probably in other respects, Lapwai was at this time the most prosperous of the mission stations, and this report is the most cheering one that we get.

letters thenceforth contained many complaints, showing that conditions were becoming more and more disheartening. By the close of the year 1845 it seemed to them that the only thing that could save the missions was the settlement of Christian families in the country, as Whitman had advocated for several years. But such help failed to come, and the lonely workers in this great wilderness were left alone to meet the awful fate which was about to ingulf them.

The crisis reached, 1847; causes of hostility

Before the end of the summer of 1847 many of the Cayuses became so surly and insolent that Whitman seems to have thought seriously of abandoning Waiilatpu and removing with his family either to the Dalles or to the Willamette valley. Unfortunately this plan was too long delayed. When the emigrants of that year arrived, many of their children were sick with the measles, a disease which soon spread rapidly among the Indians as well. Dr. Whitman treated both the whites and the Indians; but while the former usually recovered quickly, the latter, on account of their unwholesome mode of life, died off in alarming numbers. It is not surprising that this was so, but it could not be expected that the natives would understand the true reason for it. What they saw was that Whitman was saving the whites and letting their own people perish. Nay, was he not actually causing their death by administer-

ing poison instead of the medicine he pretended to be giving them? This suspicion, horrible to contemplate, took fast hold upon the minds of the Cayuses, and was the immediate cause of their determination to kill Dr. Whitman as they were accustomed to kill sorcerers in their own tribe, who, as they believed, sometimes caused deaths among them.

The massacre, November 29, 1847

The blow fell on the afternoon of the 29th of November, 1847, when Dr. Whitman, his wife, and seven other persons at the mission were put to death in the most barbarous manner. Five more victims followed within a few days; while half a hundred women and children, largely emigrants who were stopping at the station, were held as captives in one of the mission houses.

Rescue of the prisoners

The savages supposed that by keeping control of these helpless ones they could save themselves from the vengeance of the white settlers in Oregon; for they gave out word that all captives would be put to death at the first news of war from down the river. Fortunately, before this came, Peter Skeen Ogden of the Hudson's Bay Company arrived from Vancouver, pushing through at the utmost speed on learning of the massacre, to try to save the captives. It was no easy matter to do this; but by exerting all his influence and authority, Mr. Ogden finally succeeded in ransoming not alone those at

Waiilatpu, but the people at the Spalding mission as well — a total of fifty-seven persons. All were taken down the river, finding friends and homes among the settlers of the Willamette valley, where they were soon joined by the missionaries from the northern station.[1]

Declaration of war

When the news of the massacre reached the Willamette valley (December 8), it produced the wildest alarm. No one knew how far this atrocity might be the result of a union among the up-river tribes for the purpose of destroying all of the white people in Oregon. They proposed, however, not to wait till the Indians could reach the valley, but to send a force of men up the river at once. So great was the excitement and enthusiasm that in a single day a company of troops was raised, equipped as well as possible, furnished with a flag made by the women of Oregon City, and hurried forward to the scene of danger. In a short time an entire regiment was provided, by means of which, in the space of a few months, the Cayuses were severely punished, and peace with its blessings was once more restored to the Oregon colony.[2]

[1] A generation after these events took place Jesse Applegate alluded feelingly to this service of Mr. Ogden as "an act of pure mercy and philanthropy, which money could neither hire nor reward."

[2] The Indians who committed the murders were afterward secured, tried, and executed.

Strong feeling against Congress

But the war was a severe drain upon the people. The provisional government had no funds, and money had to be raised in order to keep men in the field. The difficulty was nobly met; well-to-do settlers, merchants, and others loaned money, and farmers generally furnished supplies of grain and other food. Large quantities of goods were purchased of the Hudson's Bay Company, practically as a loan, although individual settlers gave their notes by way of security. It was generally expected that the United States government would take this burden of debt upon itself, this being the least it could do to make amends for leaving the people of Oregon so long defenseless. At this crucial time, when the colony was shrouded in the darkest gloom, men remembered the numerous appeals which had vainly gone up from this far-off valley to the national capital, and a feeling of bitterness against a seemingly ungrateful government was mingled with their grief and fears. Had Congress done its duty, so they believed, this evil would not have befallen them.

Last memorial to Congress

In the excitement of those December days the Oregon leaders prepared a ringing memorial to the national legislature, and started "Joe" Meek eastward to carry it to Washington. "Having called upon the government so often in vain," they say, "we have almost despaired of

receiving its protection; yet we trust that our present situation, when fully laid before you, will at once satisfy your honorable body of the necessity of extending the strong arm of guardianship and protection over this distant, but beautiful portion of the United States' domain. Our relations with the proud and powerful tribes of Indians residing east of the Cascade Mountains, hitherto uniformly amicable and pacific, have recently assumed quite a different character. They have shouted the war whoop, and crimsoned their tomahawks in the blood of our citizens. . . . Circumstances warrant your memorialists in believing that many of the powerful tribes . . . have formed an alliance for the purpose of carrying on hostilities against our settlements. . . . To repel the attacks of so formidable a foe, and protect our families and property from violence and rapine, will require more strength than we possess . . . we have a right to expect your aid, and you are in justice bound to extend it. . . . If it be at all the intention of our honored parent to spread her guardian wings over her sons and daughters in Oregon, she surely will not refuse to do it now, when they are struggling with all the ills of a weak and temporary government, and when perils are daily thickening around them, and preparing to burst upon their heads. When the ensuing summer's sun shall have

dispelled the snow from the mountains, we shall look with glowing hopes and restless anxiety for the coming of your laws and your arms."

The news in Washington

Joe Meek, accompanied by nine sturdy associates, set out from the headquarters of the army at Waiilatpu on the 4th of March, 1848, and in just sixty-six days reached St. Joseph, Missouri. Six days later (May 17) he arrived at St. Louis, and now the dreadful story of the Whitman massacre was flashed all over the land, producing a feeling of sympathy and anxiety for the Oregon people that nothing in their previous history had been able to excite. Meek went to Washington and laid his dispatches before President Polk. They were at once sent to Congress, together with a message calling on that body to act, and act quickly, in order that troops might be hurried to the defense of Oregon before the end of the summer. No great haste was possible, for the question of slavery was beginning to overshadow all else, and the strongest passions were aroused on this subject in the course of the debate on the Oregon bill. Yet so much general interest was felt in the safety of Oregon that the measure was finally passed, just before the adjournment of Congress, August 13, after a continuous session of twenty-one hours.

President Polk signed the bill and appointed General Joseph Lane of Indiana governor of

The territory of Oregon; General Lane governor

the territory of Oregon. Joe Meek was given the office of United States marshal in the new government. Governor Lane, Meek, and a number of others started for Oregon by way of Santa Fé and California late in August. They succeeded, though with much difficulty, in reaching San Francisco, where the governor and marshal took ship for the Columbia. They arrived at Oregon City March 2, 1849, and on the following day the new territorial government was proclaimed.[1]

General Joseph Lane.

[1] This was the day before Polk's administration came to an end. General Lane acted as governor less than two years, resigning in June, 1850. In 1851 he was elected to represent the territory in Congress, and filled the office until 1859, when he took his seat as one of the United States senators from Oregon. In 1860 he was nominated for Vice President on the ticket with John C. Breckenridge. He died in 1881.

CHAPTER XV

THE NORTHWEST AND CALIFORNIA

Conditions in early California

For most Americans the history of the Pacific coast had thus far been summed up in the story of Oregon. The Mexican (until 1821 the Spanish) territory south of the parallel of 42° had sometimes attracted the notice of public men, and once or twice produced some effect upon the government's plans concerning Oregon. But until about 1840 very little attention was paid to this vast province, where four or five thousand people were living in comparative idleness, scattered about through the valleys and over the plains of that fair and sunny land. The principal occupation was the keeping of herds, which required little labor. The "*Boston Ships*," as the American traders were called, plied up and down the long coast line, visiting the harbors and inlets where they exchanged groceries and manufactured goods for the cartloads of beef hides and bags of tallow brought down from the ranches.

Americans settle in California

Sometimes sailors, attracted by the easy life of the Californians, deserted from these vessels

and became residents in the country. Other Americans came overland as hunters and trappers, like Jedediah Smith, Ewing Young, and the Walker party sent out by Captain Bonneville. Many of them remained to marry native women, secure grants of land, and become citizens. After a time the region became pretty well known among the class of frontiersmen who were beginning to go to Oregon, and in 1841 the first emigrant train made its way overland, partly by the Oregon trail, to the Sacramento valley. Thereafter the annual migrations to the far West were usually divided, a portion branching off at Fort Hall to go to California, although Oregon still received by far the larger share.

Captain Sutter and Sutter's Fort

In 1839 Captain John A. Sutter, formerly a soldier in the Swiss army, went to California by way of Oregon, and in 1841 he secured from the Mexican governor eleven square leagues of land in the Sacramento valley. He built a strong fort of adobes on the site of the present city of Sacramento, began raising grain and cattle on a large scale, and also traded with the Indians for furs. Sutter employed a number of Americans upon his estate, and by furnishing supplies to others enabled them to settle in this interior section of California. The fort was on the main emigrant routes from the United States and Oregon, which

helped to make it in a few years the center of the most important American community in the country.

Rumors of war

The Mexican government was not strong during this period even at home, while the great distance to California from the Mexican capital, the difficulties of communication, and the scattered condition of the population made

SUTTER'S FORT IN 1849.

her rule in this province so feeble as to be almost ridiculous. The result was numerous revolutions, in which the Americans usually took part, and such a state of political unrest that men accustomed to a settled and strong government could scarcely be blamed for wishing a change. The interest which the United States already had in Oregon, the continued emigration of her people by sea and land to California, the letters written back by these

emigrants, the reports of official visitors and the books of far West travelers produced a feeling that our country must finally become possessed of the southern as well as the northern section of the Pacific coast. After 1836 there was always danger of war between the United States and Mexico over the question of annexing Texas to the Union, thus increasing the feeling of uncertainty respecting California. It was well understood that in case of hostilities this province would doubtless be captured by the American fleet.[1]

The Bear Flag Revolt, June, 1846

By the spring of 1846 there were several hundred Americans scattered through the country, the most numerous body of them in the vicinity of Sutter's Fort. Lieutenant John C. Frémont, the "Pathfinder," with his surveying party, had wintered in California, where he came into conflict with the government authorities. He then marched north toward Oregon, but turned back from Klamath Lake on receiving a visit from Gillespie, a secret agent of the United States. The settlers about the fort became convinced from his actions that war had broken out, and some of them decided that it would be the proper thing for them to declare

[1] In 1842 Commodore Jones, believing that war had broken out between the two nations, actually took possession of Monterey and hoisted the American flag. He gave up the place a few hours later on learning his mistake.

California independent of Mexico. This they did at Sonoma, June 14, 1846, raising the famous lone star flag with the rudely painted figure of a bear upon it (the "Bear Flag").

The war of conquest

Now followed an armed conflict, which might perhaps have been avoided, between the United States and the Californians. Frémont took a prominent part in it, as did also Commodore Stockton of the American fleet. The United States government sent General Kearny to California by way of Santa Fé, and after a few months of fighting the territory came definitely into American hands. When the treaty of peace was signed, February 2, 1848, the conquest was confirmed to us. A military government had already been established, the laws changed somewhat in accordance with American ideas, and a new system of administration substituted for that formerly maintained by Mexico.

The gold discovery

It was expected that these changes would promote the prosperity of California, which might at last hope to become a rival of Oregon upon the Pacific coast.[1] But no one dreamed

[1] When the Bear Flag Revolt occurred, Captain Sutter (who was a German Swiss and never mastered the English language perfectly) wrote exultantly to a friend, "What for progress will California make now!" The manuscript letter from which this is quoted is in possession of Mr. P. J. Healy of San Francisco, who kindly permitted the writer to examine his valuable collection.

of the wonderful transformation about to take place. On the 24th of January, ten days before the treaty of peace was signed, James W. Marshall made his world-famous discovery of gold on the American River, some fifty miles above Sutter's Fort. He and Captain Sutter wished to keep the benefits of the find to themselves, but the secret escaped, as great secrets usually do, and in a few weeks the inhabitants of California were hurrying north with shovel and pan, hoping to wash quick fortunes out of the sands brought down from the mysterious Sierras. So great did the "rush" become that at San Francisco and other towns ordinary lines of business were suspended, stores, warehouses, and even printing offices were deserted, vessels touching at San Francisco had to remain in port because the crews escaped to the mines. Picks, shovels, and pans rose to famine prices.

The news reaches Oregon, August, 1848

Before the summer closed news of the discovery had reached Oregon, producing an excitement scarcely less intense than that caused by the Indian war just ended. Resolutions were instantly taken, plans made, and in a few days a company was on its way southward. Soon a regular tide of travel, on foot, by pack train, and wagon, set in across the Siskiyous. Oregon lost within a single year a very large proportion of its male inhabitants.

Some of the most prominent men passed into this new emigration; for example, Peter H. Burnett, soon to become the first governor of the state of California. When General Lane and Joe Meek reached San Francisco on their way northward, they saw numbers of Oregon men, some of whom, leaving the Willamette valley or Puget Sound almost penniless, were already returning to their families with thousands of dollars in gold dust.

The "Forty-niners"; progress of California

The news was carried across the Rockies, and before the arrival of winter hundreds, thousands, on the Atlantic coast were preparing for the voyage to Panama, expecting to cross the Isthmus and take ship to San Francisco. Others in the interior impatiently waited till the grass should start in the spring, when twenty-five thousand persons, in an almost continuous caravan, moved westward to the valley of the Sacramento. But this was only the beginning. Month after month, and year after year, the excited multitudes pressed on to this new El Dorado. All were looking for the golden treasure; but while most men sought it in the river drift, many took the surer methods of carrying supplies to the mines, or of cultivating the soil in order to produce flour, bacon, fruit, and other necessities which during the early years of the gold rush brought such fabulous prices. Hundreds of new occupations

were opened, and fortunes made in the most diverse ways. No young western community had ever been advertised as was California during these years; and few, even of the most prosperous, had grown as rapidly as she.

San Francisco the commercial emporium of the Pacific coast

The mining camps were soon extended so as to embrace a large portion of the territory west of the Sierras; towns like Stockton and Sacramento grew up as interior supply stations; while San Francisco, at the great harbor of California, rose at one bound to be the place of chief importance among Pacific coast seaports. Here was the emporium of all the trade of this rapidly growing population, having relations with the eastern coast, with Mexico, Central and South America, Australia, Hawaii, and in general all countries interested in the trade of the great gold-producing territory which fortune had recently tossed into the lap of the United States. Men from the eastern cities employed their capital and their business skill in building up at San Francisco great commercial establishments, whose influence has been felt throughout the later course of Pacific coast history. They did not confine themselves to California, but came northward to the Columbia River, to Puget Sound, and the smaller harbors along the Northwest Coast; to the interior districts of the Oregon country, wherever opportunities for profitable commerce

were to be found. San Francisco's population of a few hundred in 1848 grew by 1860 to more than 56,000, in another decade it became 150,000, and by 1880 exceeded a quarter of a million.

Change in the course of Pacific coast history

We cannot follow this wonderful movement in detail, but it is easy to see that the discovery of gold produced startling changes in the relations between the northern and southern sections of the Pacific slope. When the Oregon bill was before Congress in the spring of 1848, some wished to couple with it a bill for a California and a New Mexican territory also; but others declared that the "native-born" territory of Oregon should not be unequally yoked with "territories scarcely a month old, and peopled by Mexicans and half-Indian Californians." Two years after this incident California had a population, mainly American, of 92,000 and was ready for statehood, ten years later she had 380,000, and in another decade more than half a million; while the territory of Oregon, which in 1850 included the entire district west of the Rocky Mountains and north of California, had in that year less than 14,000 people. By 1870 the Pacific Northwest, then divided into the state of Oregon and the two territories of Washington and Idaho, had a total population of only 130,000 as against California's 560,000.

California overshadows the Northwest

These facts tell the story of how the natural course of the Pacific coast's development was changed by the magic of gold. The long list of American explorers, traders, and missionaries, whose deeds and sacrifices glorify the early history of the Pacific Northwest, were largely forgotten by a nation entranced with the story of the "Forty-niners." The far-reaching influence of Oregon as the oldest American territory on the Pacific coast faded quickly from the memories of men. The Oregon Trail was already deep worn through the sand hills along the Platte and Sweetwater, Bear River, and the Portneuf, by the wagons of the Oregon pioneers; it was lined with the crumbling bones of their cattle, and marked by the graves of their dead; yet instantly, after the passage of the thronging multitudes of '49, it became the "California Trail," and to this day most men know it by no other name. California, in a word, so completely overshadowed the Northwest in wealth, in commerce, and in population, that to the people of the country in general this state has seemed to be about all of the Pacific coast.

CHAPTER XVI

PROGRESS AND POLITICS, 1849–1859

California's debt to the Northwest

THE relations between the Northwest and California were naturally very close. Those Oregon men who went to the gold mines were seasoned pioneers, who had already partly conquered and civilized one great section of the Pacific coast. They were a valuable element in the new and mixed population that now poured into the southern territory, helping to bring order out of disorder, and to establish an effective government for the new state as they had already done for their own colony. It is of course impossible, as well as unnecessary, to measure California's debt to the Northwest during the early years of the gold rush; but it was undoubtedly very great.

New California helps to create a new Northwest

On the other hand, there is much truth in the claim that the rapid development of California gave an entirely new aspect to life in the Northwest. The first effect of the gold discovery was to draw away one half or perhaps two thirds of the able-bodied men of Oregon, and to leave the country with insufficient labor

to cultivate the fields already opened. But this was only a temporary drawback. The mines afforded a wonderful market for everything the northern region could produce. Packers visited the farms, buying up the surplus flour, meat, lard, butter, eggs, vegetables, and fruits. A large number of boats entered the Columbia, ascending to the new village of Portland on the Willamette, where they took on cargoes of provisions as rapidly as these could be collected from up the river. Cargoes of lumber were carried away from the mills already established, and these proving insufficient to meet the demand, others were built and put into operation at various points along the Columbia. Farmers, merchants, laborers, manufacturers, speculators, in fact all classes of settlers in Oregon, reaped a magnificent harvest from the filling up of California, and the new wealth of gold. Debts were canceled, homes improved, and the conditions of life made easier and more pleasant than they had been in the strictly pioneer time; new enterprises of all sorts were started in the Willamette settlement, machinery was imported for the use of the farmer, roads opened, and steamboats placed upon the rivers. The new territorial government, which fortunately came just at the beginning of the new age, was of great benefit to the people in many ways. Among other things it enabled them to

make some provision for a system of common schools,[1] and to secure for this region a cheaper, more frequent, and regular mail service. Under these circumstances the population increased much more rapidly than formerly; in spite of the glittering attractions of California property rose in value and general prosperity prevailed.

Prosperity of the Puget Sound colony

When the discovery of gold was first reported in the autumn of 1848, there were only a few settlers on Puget Sound, most of whom were engaged in making shingles and getting out timber for the Hudson's Bay Company. This was almost their only means of securing the supplies needed to support their families. About twenty-five of the men immediately set out for the gold mines, leaving a very small remnant of population in the country. In a few months many of them returned with an abundance of money, to be used in making improvements. Samuel Hancock tells us that when he came back to Olympia in the fall of 1849, after spending a year in the mines, "everything bore the impress of prosperity." Among other things a grist mill had been

[1] The pioneers of the Northwest showed commendable enterprise in the establishment of high-grade schools, the earliest of which was the Oregon Institute founded by the Methodist missionaries at Salem in 1841. It afterward grew into the Willamette University. The second was Tualatin Academy, the beginning of Pacific University. Common schools were also maintained by private subscription before the public school system went into effect.

erected, which was of great benefit to the community.

Beginnings of lumbering on Puget Sound

The settlement on Puget Sound received special benefits from the great demand for lumber which came from San Francisco and the other California towns. No portion of the Pacific Northwest was better fitted by nature to supply this need; for here the forests usually came down to the water's edge, while many of the smaller inlets, some of them excellent harbors for ocean vessels, afforded the very best sites for sawmills. Early in the year 1849 the brig *Orbit* put into Budd's Inlet (Olympia) for a load of piles. This was the beginning of the lumber trade with San Francisco. In a short time mills were running near Olympia (Tumwater), at the mouth of the Dewamish (Seattle), at Steilacoom, Cape Flattery, New Dungeness, Port Townsend, and other places. With lumber selling at sixty dollars per thousand feet, as it did for a time, the business was immensely profitable.

The discovery of coal

Aside from lumber the California communities were in great need of fuel, and the people of San Francisco made anxious inquiries about the possibility of getting coal near the harbors of the Northwest Coast. An inferior quality had been found north of the Columbia before 1850. In 1851 Samuel Hancock began searching near Puget Sound, and with the help of the

natives found what seemed to be an important deposit of this useful mineral. Other discoveries were made at later times on Bellingham Bay, near Seattle, and at other points all convenient to good harbors. Some of these were soon worked, with the result that thousands of tons of coal were shipped to San Francisco annually. All of these things brought about a very prosperous condition in the little colony.

Increase in population

Since the country south of the Columbia had been settling up for a comparatively long time, the lands there had been pretty carefully picked over; and this fact, together with the commercial advantages of Puget Sound, caused some of the emigrants of these years to go northward in search of homes. The lumber mills gave employment, while the explorations in search of coal, and for other purposes, were bringing to light new farming lands in the rich valleys back from the Sound, where the settlers now began to take claims. But for several years little progress was made in agriculture, flour and seed grain actually being imported from San Francisco at great expense in exchange for a portion of the lumber sent down. The census of 1850 gives 1111 as the total population north of the Columbia. Three years later a special enumeration showed 3965. In that year, for the first time, Puget Sound drew a considerable part of the emigration to

the Northwest, thirty-five wagons crossing the Cascades by a new road which the northern settlers had opened from the Yakima River to Olympia.

Agitation for a territorial government

The people about Puget Sound found themselves completely separated from those on the Willamette, and living as it were in a world of their own. This was due largely to the difficulty of communication between the Columbia River and the Sound. The feeling was strengthened by the fact that all the regular trade of this section was with San Francisco. Since their situation rendered them independent of the Columbia River commercially, they came to believe that their country should also have a separate government. Agitation for dividing the territory began in 1851, and the next year matters were brought to a head. In September, 1852, a newspaper called the *Columbian*[1] was begun at Olympia for the purpose of advocating the project, and one month later (October 27) a meeting was held which determined on choosing delegates to a convention. This was to decide whether or not to

[1] Files of this paper, from September, 1852, to December, 1853, the entire period of its existence, as well as complete files of the *Pioneer and Democrat*, and the *Puget Sound Herald*, were consulted in the private library of Hon. C. B. Bagley of Seattle. The writer also obtained from Mr. Bagley the loan of his files of the *Washington Statesman*, Walla Walla, which proved invaluable for the study of the early history of the "Inland Empire."

ask Congress to erect the district north and west of the Columbia into a territorial government. Although some of the people living along the river, to whom Oregon City was more convenient than Olympia, objected to the plan, the proposed meeting was held on the 25th of November, and a memorial asking for the change sent to General Lane who then represented the territory in Congress. On the 15th of January, 1853, the Oregon legislature, sympathizing with the demand of the northern settlements, adopted a similar memorial; but before this reached him Lane had introduced a bill for creating the territory of Columbia. It passed on the 10th of February, 1853, with the name *Washington* substituted for *Columbia*, a change with which the people of the new territory were very well satisfied. General Isaac I. Stevens, who had been commissioned to survey a northern route for a Pacific railroad, was appointed governor. He arrived at Olympia on the 26th of November, 1853, and the new organization was put in operation.[1]

[1] General Stevens was a trained soldier and engineer, a graduate of West Point. His success in finding a practicable line for a railroad immediately gave him great influence with the people of Washington, who believed thoroughly in the future of their section. He served as governor till 1857, was then elected delegate to Congress from the territory, remaining in that position till the breaking out of the Civil War, when he went to the field of action. He was killed while gallantly leading his divi-

Beginnings of settlement in southern Oregon

As the gold discovery promoted the prosperity of the Willamette valley and Puget Sound, so it also led to the planting of new communities in other favorable districts of the Northwest. The region known as southern Oregon contains the two important valleys of the Umpqua and Rogue rivers. It had already become known to the pioneers, partly through explorations for a southern emigrant road made in 1846 under the direction of Jesse Applegate. A portion of the emigration of that and the following years came to the Willamette over this route; and when Oregon men began going to the gold mines of California, the country became still better known. Wagons and pack trains, men on foot and on horseback, were continually passing back and forth; so that it was not long before a few individuals, impressed with the beauty of the landscape, the excellence of the grass and water, and the opportunities for farming and stock raising, began to think of locating claims in these valleys.

The Umpqua valley

Jesse Applegate, who was the most noted explorer of southern Oregon, was himself led to settle in Umpqua valley.[1] In the spring

sion at Chantilly. The "Life of Isaac Ingalls Stevens," by Hazard Stevens, 2 vols., Boston, 1900, gives a full account of his services and much valuable matter on the history of the Northwest.

[1] He founded and named the town of Yoncalla, which became his home. General Lane also took a claim in this valley, near the town of Roseburg, and spent his declining years in retirement.

of 1850, he with a number of others organized a company to take up lands and establish town sites. It happened that while these pioneers were making their way down toward the sea, they met a party of Californians who had entered the Umpqua by ship for the same purpose. The two companies thus accidentally brought together formed a new association which undertook to colonize the Umpqua valley. Settlers and miners quickly overran the region. The county of Umpqua, embracing the whole of southern Oregon, was created by the territorial legislature in 1851.

Rogue River and the southern coast

The valley of Rogue River received settlers about the same time, and here the influence of gold discoveries was strongly felt. California miners had already prospected the Sierras to the borders of the Oregon country; and just at the close of the year 1851 rich placer mines were discovered on Jackson Creek, a branch of Rogue River. A new rush began, Californians and Oregonians both taking part in it, so that in a very short time the village of Jacksonville had a population of several hundred, and a number of other mining centers were established in the same neighborhood. Settlers pushed in at the same time to take up the fertile lands along the Rogue River and its branches. While these things were going forward in the upper portions of the valleys of

southern Oregon, settlements were also begun near the mouths of the rivers, especially at Port Orford and about Coos Bay. The discovery of coal near Coos Bay gave it a large trade with San Francisco. The various centers of population were connected with one another by means of mountain roads or trails; the interest in gold mining stimulated emigration, and a population of several thousand people was soon to be found within this territory, which at the beginning of the California gold rush was an absolute wilderness, occupied by native barbarians.

Indian outbreaks; the Rogue River War

When the early missionaries and settlers came to Oregon they found the Indians under the control of the Hudson's Bay Fur Company, whose officers were able to secure for the whites such lands and other privileges as the Indians had to bestow. The company was very successful in preventing conflicts between the two races. Only rarely were the settlers molested by the natives during these years, the most notable exception being the Whitman massacre in 1847. When the United States took control, in 1849, the situation had become more difficult to handle. Settlers were by this time becoming numerous; the Indians had begun to fear for the safety of their lands, and they were not yet convinced of the national government's power. Soon afterward troubles began, especially in the newly occupied territory of

southern Oregon, where miners and travelers were occasionally murdered, and settlers driven from their lands. In some cases, it must be confessed, the whites were to blame as well as the red men. But the time soon came when the tribes of southern Oregon were ready to go on the war path, and then hundreds of innocent persons suffered the untold horrors which have always marked such savage outbreaks. Men were shot down on the highway or in the field; at dead of night unprotected families were besieged in their cabins, the men killed outright, the women and children enslaved, and homes burned to the ground; sometimes whole settlements were either massacred or driven away. This war, usually called, from the most terrible of the tribes concerned in it, the Rogue River War, began in 1851. It lasted, with some intermissions, till 1856, when the Indians being removed to reservations the settlers were at last secure in the possession of their homes.[1]

Other Indian wars

Southern Oregon was not the only section of the Northwest to suffer from the uprising of the natives during this period. On Puget Sound, too, the Indians began to murder white men as early as 1850, though no general outbreak occurred until several years later. In

[1] In this war General Lane performed most important services for Oregon, both as warrior and peacemaker. The Indians stood in great awe of him.

1854–1855 General Stevens, as superintendent of Indian affairs, made treaties with nearly all of the tribes both in eastern and western Washington, and it was supposed that these would put an end to all conflict between the two races. But as a matter of fact the natives, seeing the country filling up with white people, were about ready for a general war in defense of what they considered to be their own country. The situation here was not different from that which brought on the great Indian wars in other sections of the United States. Just as New England had its King Philip's War, and the middle West its struggles with Tecumseh and Black Hawk, so the people of the Pacific Northwest, when settlement threatened to crowd the Indians off their lands, were forced to meet great combinations of native tribes under Chief John, Leschi, Kamiakin, and others. Except in southern Oregon, these wars came mainly in the years 1855–1858. They included many harrowing incidents, like the murder of the settlers in White River valley near Puget Sound, the daring attack upon the little village of Seattle in the spring of 1856, the slaughter of the emigrants on the Malheur River, and massacres at the Cascades. The United States government maintained troops at various places throughout the Northwest, and in some cases these rendered most effective service during

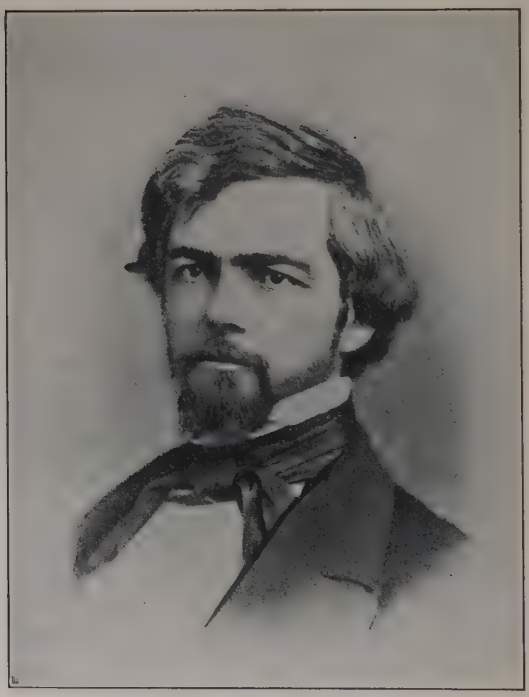
the Indian war; but their numbers were too small to meet the great emergency, while difficulties arose between the territorial officers and the military commanders that caused the burden of the war to fall mainly upon the people themselves. Volunteer companies were called into the field, who with some severe fighting and much attendant hardship were able to bring this distressing period to a close. The Indians here as elsewhere found it necessary to accept the bounty of Congress in the shape of a reservation, with pay for the lands which they gave up to the government. Most of the treaties went into effect in 1859.

The Oregon constitutional convention, August to September, 1857

Several years prior to the close of the Indian wars, the question of statehood for Oregon began to be seriously discussed, and in 1856 a bill for admitting the territory into the Union was introduced in Congress by General Lane. Though this failed, another bill passed the House at the next session, authorizing the people to frame a state constitution. It did not pass the Senate, but the legislature of Oregon Territory had already provided for submitting the question of holding a convention to the voters at the June (1857) election. It was carried by a large majority, delegates were chosen from the several counties, and on the third Monday in August the convention met in the town of Salem. September 18 a state

constitution was adopted, which being submitted to the people was ratified by a vote of 7195 in favor to 3195 against. The state government went into operation in July, 1858, although Oregon was not formally admitted to the Union till the 14th of February, 1859.[1]

[1] The population of Oregon in 1860 was 52,465, and of Washington Territory, 11,594.



General Isaac Ingalls Stevens.

CHAPTER XVII

THE INLAND EMPIRE

Extent and character of the Inland Empire

THE Indian wars of the Pacific Northwest, like those of New England, western New York, and various sections of the Mississippi valley, were followed by a period in which population spread rapidly over previously unoccupied territory. Thus far settlement had been practically confined to the region between the Cascade Mountains and the Pacific, including the Willamette valley, Puget Sound, the Cowlitz and Columbia districts, the valleys of southern Oregon, and a few points near the seacoast. This was only a small part of the Oregon country, the eastern section, from the Cascades to the Rockies, containing more than three times as large an area. Above the point where the Columbia breaks through the Cascades, one hundred and ninety miles from the sea, it receives branches from the north whose sources lie far beyond the American boundary of 49°, others from the south rising below the 42d parallel, and still others from every part of the west slope of the Rockies between these two boundary lines. They drain an American territory

embracing about two hundred thousand square miles, nearly one fourth larger than the combined areas of the New England states, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. A portion of it is occupied by the forested ranges of the Bitter Root and Blue mountains; but in general it is a region of great plains, relieved by wooded valleys and gently sloping hills. The climate, soil, and productions, all vary greatly from those of western Oregon, and the natives were superior to the western Indians in intellect as well as in strength, energy, and warlike valor.

Its agricultural possibilities begin to be understood

Owing to the light rainfall over the greater portion of the Inland Empire, some early travelers pronounced the entire region unfit to be the home of civilized man. But the missionaries proved that the natural grasses afforded excellent pasturage for cattle and sheep,[1] and that the soil in many places would produce bounteous crops of grain and vegetables even without irrigation; while with an artificial supply of water surprising results could be obtained. Several of the valleys, like Walla Walla and the Grand Ronde, which lay in the path of the emigrants to Oregon, attracted the attention of the pioneers at an early time by

[1] Dr. Whitman wrote in October, 1847, just before his death: "The interior of Oregon is unrivaled by any country for the grazing of stock, of which sheep is the best. This interior will now be sought after."

the evident fertility of their lands; and as early as 1847 it seemed certain that the first of these would soon be occupied by farmers. But the Whitman massacre of that year destroyed these prospects, and another decade was to pass away before plans of settlement could be resumed. In the meantime other sections of the Inland Empire were beginning to receive attention on account of the rich farming lands they were supposed to contain.

General Stevens's observations

When General Stevens reached Olympia, in November, 1853, after completing the survey of the northern railroad route, he declared to the people of Puget Sound that there were several great stretches of territory in eastern Washington which invited settlement. "I can speak advisedly," he says, "of the beautiful St. Mary's valley just west of the Rocky Mountains and stretching across the whole breadth of the territory; of the plain fifty miles wide bordering the south bank of the Spokane River; of the valley extending from Spokane River to Colville; of the Cœur d'Alene Prairie of six hundred square miles; the Walla Walla valley. The Nez Percé country is said to be rich as well as the country bordering on the Yakima River."

The Indian war prevents settlement

His treaties with the native tribes soon afterward were expected to throw some of these tracts open, and other treaties made about the

same time with the Indians of eastern Oregon looked to the settlement of portions of that country. But when the Indians went on the war path in 1855 this entire region, except a small district protected by the military post at the Dalles, was once more closed to the peaceful tiller of the soil. The prairies and open river valleys, instead of being dotted over with settlers' cabins or the white-sheeted wagons of

CŒUR D'ALENE, 1853.

emigrants, were traversed in all directions by long files of marching men, and troops of gallant cavalry. Yet this only served to make the whole country more familiar to the people of western Oregon and Washington, and to increase the desire to settle there as soon as the Indian troubles should be over.

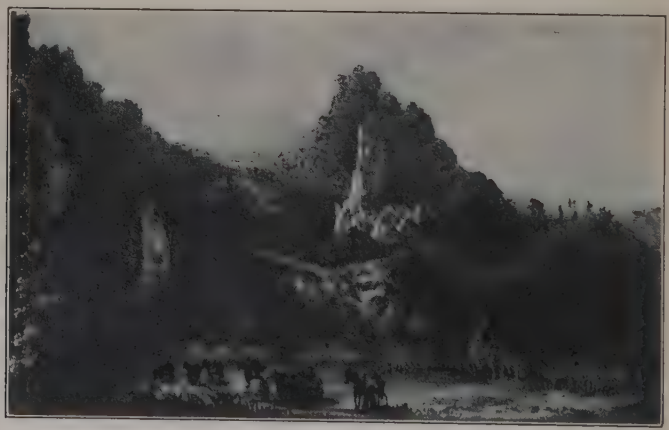
Gold hunting east of the Cascades

By this time (1859) there was an additional motive for emigration to the Inland Empire. Even before the Indian war there had been more or less prospecting for gold in the eastern country, and in 1855 discoveries were made at Colville, though at that time little could be done with them. In the years 1857–1858 occurred a rush to Fraser River in British Columbia. For a time it was supposed this region would prove very rich; but soon disappointments crowded upon the Americans who had gone there, and a great outpouring took place. The men who left these mines spread over and prospected large sections of the eastern country, with results only less wonderful than those obtained in California ten years earlier. Rich gold districts were opened near Colville; on the Clearwater, Salmon River, Boise River, John Day's River, Burnt River, Powder River; the Owyhee, Kootenai, Deer Lodge, Beaverhead; the Prickly Pear, and other places. Californians streamed northward as Oregonians had gone south in '48 and '49. Mining camps grew in a few months to towns of several thousand people, and sometimes disappeared quite as rapidly, when richer diggings were opened elsewhere, or water for gold washing failed. By rapid stages the prospectors passed up the several branches of the Columbia, until they stood once more upon the summit of the

Rockies, this time coming from the west. At South Pass, Helena, and many other camps, they met and mingled with the crowds of gold seekers arriving from the East. These were "tenderfeet" to the rugged men who had spent twelve or fifteen years in the mining districts of California, British Columbia, eastern Oregon, Washington, and Idaho, and who rather gloried in the name "yonder siders," applied to them by the other class.

Carrying supplies to the mining camps

When the miners turned toward the northeast the pack trains headed in the same direc-



PACK TRAIN ON MOUNTAIN TRAIL.

tion, carrying the eager gold seekers with their outfits, and following from camp to camp with regular supplies of bacon and flour, picks, shovels, pans, quicksilver, and other necessities of the business. From ten to fifty horses

or mules usually made up the train, though sometimes more than one hundred animals were employed. They were loaded with packs varying from two hundred to four hundred pounds. At first many of these trains set out from the Willamette valley directly, crossing the Cascade Mountains; but in a very short time (as early as 1862) the Oregon Steam Navigation Company, with headquarters at Portland, made arrangements for carrying goods up the river as far as old Fort Walla Walla, then as now called Wallula. Intermediate points were The Dalles and Umatilla Landing.

Walla Walla a great distributing center

At Walla Walla, located a few miles above the site of the Whitman mission, a military post had been established in 1856, which soon drew about it a small settlement. This place now became the distributing center for a mining region embracing nearly the whole of the eastern country. The Dalles sent goods up the John Day valley; Umtilla carried to Powder River, Owyhee, Boise Basin, and a few other places in eastern Oregon and southern Idaho; but Walla Walla sent its pack trains not only to most of these camps, but to Colville, Kootenai, the Salmon and the Clearwater, the Prickly Pear and the upper Missouri. The trails radiated in all directions from this little town, and during the packing season long lines of horses and mules were ever coming and

going. In winter the feeding yards of the valley were filled with poor, worn creatures, whose scarred backs and ugly girth marks proved the class to which they belonged.[1] The packers themselves were an important social element in Walla Walla and Wallula, sometimes giving grand balls which the entire community would attend. Many of them were enterprising young men who have since made themselves felt in business and professional life.

The Montana trade by steamboat and wagon

The Columbia River, though affording with its branches over two thousand miles of navigable water, is divided into sections by frequent natural obstructions like the Cascades, Dalles, Great Falls, and Priest's Rapids. As the interior trade grew, the navigation company built boats on section after section, until it became possible to go from Portland to Lake Pend d'Oreille on the North Fork almost wholly by water. This development resulted in part from the opening of trade with the Rocky Mountain country. Active mining operations began in what is now Montana, but then eastern Washington and western Dakota, in 1862. The earliest diggings were located west

[1] The number of pack animals maintained in the valley is almost incredible. In the winter of 1866–1867 between five hundred and six hundred were kept within seven miles of Wallula. During ten days in the month of July, 1869, when times were dull, trains aggregating five hundred and fifty-nine packs were fitted out at Walla Walla.

of the Rockies, but soon rich discoveries were made east of the mountains also. Packers from Walla Walla crossed over at once, carrying hundreds of tons of supplies at very great expense. A military road, from Fort Benton on the upper Missouri to Walla Walla, had been constructed between the years 1859 and 1862, under the direction of Captain John Mullan. It was always passable for pack trains, but soon

FORT BENTON, 1853.

fell into such a state of disrepair that loaded wagons could not safely pass over it. Soon the demand became loud for the reopening of this highway. Work was done upon it at various times, with the result that many wagons, drawn by six or eight pairs of mules, carried flour and bacon, produced in the Willamette

valley, from the head of navigation on the Columbia to Helena on the Missouri, a distance of only about six hundred miles.

Competition between East and West; rapid growth of Portland

Pacific coast commodities now came into competition with those brought from St. Louis in many little steamboats; and thus the predictions of Mr. Floyd were in a way fulfilled: a commercial route had been opened across the continent *by steamboat and wagon*. The city of Portland, as the western emporium of this trade with the Inland Empire and Montana, entered upon a period of rapid and substantial growth, which has continued almost unbroken to the present time.

Agriculture in the Walla Walla valley

From the beginning of this migration toward the interior, the most favorable portions of the country were eagerly sought after by those wishing to engage in agriculture or stock raising. The rapid progress of mining stimulated this movement, so that in spite of the long delay in beginning the settlement of the Inland Empire, a farming population finally spread over its fertile valleys and plains much more rapidly than would have been the case if no gold rush had occurred. The first district to be occupied was the Walla Walla valley, where the presence of the United States military post afforded a home market for products, and where the lands were not only fertile but easily tilled, comparatively well watered, and conveniently near to

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VIEW OF PORTLAND.

the Columbia River and the lower settlements. It will be remembered that this valley was about to be occupied in 1847, when the Whitman massacre suddenly drove all whites west of the Cascades. A few pioneers held claims there at the outbreak of the later Indian war, and these had to be abandoned also. When the treaties were completed in 1859, many persons were ready to take up lands in the country, while the emigration of that year furnished several hundred settlers.[1] In 1860 Walla Walla County had 1300 white people, and within the next six years the government surveyed about 750,000 acres of land in the valley, most of which was immediately taken up for agricultural purposes. The chief crop was wheat, which yielded at the rate of forty to fifty bushels, and was turned into flour for export to the numerous mining camps supplied from this center. In 1865 the amount thus sent out was 7000 barrels. At the same time other products, like hay, onions, potatoes, and wool, were shipped down the river. In 1870 Walla Walla County had 5174 inhabitants. By that time the valley was fairly well settled, containing many beautiful farms, with comfortable and even handsome dwellings, sur-

[1] The Olympia *Pioneer and Democrat* of September 30, 1859, says that eight hundred emigrants had settled in the Walla Walla valley, while twenty families had taken claims on the Yakima, and thirty on the Klickitat and through the country from the Dalles to Fort Simcoe (on the Yakima).

rounded by gardens, fruit orchards, and ornamental trees.

Settlement of the Grand Ronde valley

For many years the emigrants to Oregon had passed with regret the beautiful valley of the Grand Ronde, nestled so peacefully among the Blue Mountains. After all danger from the natives had been removed, and the Walla Walla country partly filled up, settlers began to take claims in this attractive region, notwithstanding its distance from the sea. A few were left there by the emigration of 1861, but it was the great company of 1862 which finally occupied the country. About two thousand, so the newspapers of the time declare, remained in the valley, while the rest, some eight thousand, went down the Columbia. The first winter was one of great privations; but the next summer a crop was raised on the newly broken lands, which furnished an abundance of provisions. La Grande was the principal town, and soon became the county seat of Union County, which included the Grand Ronde within its boundaries. From the first it was a place of considerable importance, being the supply center for the valley until other towns, like Union, Summerville, and Oro Dell, divided the territory with her. A wagon road built in 1863 connected the Grand Ronde valley with Walla Walla for trading purposes, while other roads and trails made it possible for this upper settle-

PHYSIOGRAPHIC MAP OF THE UNITED STATES.

ment to send its products to the mines of Boise valley, Owyhee, and other places. The abundance of timber on the slopes of the Blue Mountains, and the fine water power of the mountain streams, promoted the building of sawmills, of which there were four in 1864. A description of the valley, written in the spring of 1868, indicates that excellent progress had been made in the first five years after settlement began. "The waste prairie has changed to fenced and cultivated farms, and in all directions the handiwork of intelligence and industry is visible. Comfortable houses and outhouses have been built, orchards planted; from the poor emigrant has sprung the well-to-do farmer." County roads crossed the valley in all directions, while two good toll roads had been built through it. The population of Union County in 1870 was 2552.

Other agricultural settlements

These two illustrations of the Walla Walla and Grand Ronde valleys are sufficient to show how population spread over the fine farming districts of the Inland Empire during the years immediately following the gold rush to this region. Many other districts had a similar history. Boise valley, Powder River, the Clearwater and Spokane, the high valleys of western Montana, — all had their farming communities, producing such supplies as the mining districts could use. The Yakima valley east of the Columbia was situated much like

the Walla Walla, and was settled about the same time. By 1870 the amount of produce seeking a market from the upper Columbia was already larger than the demand to be supplied in that country, although only a small fraction of the tillable lands had as yet been taken up. The people needed better means of transportation, in order that they might ship their wheat and flour down the river to a larger and more stable market. The entire inland country waited impatiently for railroads to connect its scattered communities, and to afford the much-desired outlet to the sea.[1]

[1] A short line of railroad, from Walla Walla to Wallula, was first projected as early as 1862; but it was not until 1868 that active work was begun upon it. The road was completed in 1874, largely through the energy and financial enterprise of Dr. D. S. Baker. It was the first railroad in the territory of Washington.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE AGE OF RAILWAYS

The Northwest demands railways

THE Inland Empire was not alone in demanding railroad facilities at this time. The entire Pacific Northwest was as yet altogether lacking in this important means of development, and by 1870 the people of that section were everywhere insisting that railways be built. Many years earlier, when the Oregon question was still unsettled, and when emigration to the Columbia by means of wagons and ox teams had but just begun, several schemes were brought forward for the establishment of a transcontinental line to extend to some point on the lower Columbia, or to Puget Sound. One such project was presented to the public in 1845–1846 by Asa Whitney. He proposed to build the road on condition that the United States government grant to his company a belt of land sixty miles wide, stretching from Lake Michigan to the Pacific Ocean. Another scheme was to make the road a national one, the funds for construction to come from the sale of lands along the line. This was advocated by Mr. George Wilkes, of New York,

who in 1845 wrote a book on the subject, petitioned Congress, and asked the support of state and territorial legislatures in favor of his project.

Pacific railway surveys, 1853–1857

A few years later the rush to California gave rise to plans for a road to San Francisco Bay. Thomas H. Benton was one of the earliest advocates of this line. In 1853 surveys were begun by the national government along three different routes — one to cross the Rockies by way of South Pass, one at a point south of that place, and another far to the north, near the head waters of the Missouri. When General Stevens surveyed the last-named route, he pronounced it by far the most feasible of all, and the people of the Northwest began to think that the first transcontinental railway might be built through their section, notwithstanding California's greater wealth and population. But the times were unfavorable for railroad building, because of the great struggle between the North and South over the question of slavery, which occupied the attention of the whole country and finally led to the Civil War.

The first Pacific railway completed, 1869

While this conflict was raging, however, the government made provision (1862) for the first of the transcontinental railways by chartering the Union Pacific Company to build westward from the Missouri, and the Central Pacific to

build from the Pacific coast eastward. The rapid development of California between the years 1849 and 1860 made San Francisco the natural terminus rather than either of the northern ports so much discussed twenty years earlier.[1] The central route was chosen because this was the most direct line to northern California. The road was to cross the Rockies at South Pass, follow the Humboldt River, and enter the Sacramento valley by the old California Trail. The work of construction was soon begun at both ends, and pushed forward as rapidly as possible. Great numbers of Chinese laborers, who had begun to come to California shortly after the gold discovery, were employed on the western division. Finally, on the 10th of May, 1869, the two sections were brought together at Promontory Point, fifty miles west of Ogden, Utah, where the ceremony of driving the golden spike completed the gigantic undertaking.

The railway marks a new era

This event marks an era in the history of the Pacific coast. That vast region, once so widely separated from the remainder of the country, was now brought into close touch with the other sections, and began to share fully in

[1] Sacramento, at the head of navigation on the Sacramento River, was called the terminus of this road; but the line was at once extended to San Francisco, which became the terminus in fact.

the life of the nation as a whole. The journey from the east coast to San Francisco by way of Panama had required three and a half weeks; it was very expensive and extremely unpleasant. By the overland stage the trip was still more costly and difficult. But at last, with the completion of the railroad, the Mississippi valley had been brought within a week's journey of the Pacific; travel to the far West was cheap and pleasant; mails became frequent and regular; many varieties of western products began to be sent east in exchange for manufactured goods. Above all, a new movement of emigration set in to the Pacific coast which resulted in planting many of the most delightful farming and fruit-raising sections of California, and, as we shall see, brought about important changes in the Northwest as well.

The Northwest still unprovided with railways

Yet, in spite of the indirect benefits which it brought to the people of the Northwest, the Central Railway was not at all sufficient for their needs. It barely touched the Oregon territory at the southeast corner, without actually reaching any part of the settled area. In order to make it of great use to this section, other roads would have to be built through the Northwest connecting with the Central. The routes for such branch lines were clearly marked out by nature. One was the old emigrant road from the Columbia to Fort Hall,

along which Wilkes had proposed to carry his national railroad in 1845; the other was the wagon route which had been opened from the Columbia by way of the Willamette, southern Oregon, and the Siskiyou Mountains to the Sacramento valley.

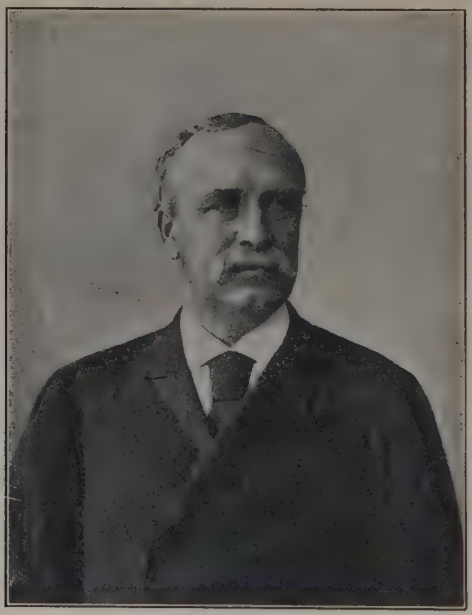
The Oregon and California railway, 1868–1887

Several years before the Central Railway was completed, California parties began surveying this line to the Columbia; and although nothing came of it at the time, other schemes and surveys were set on foot which finally led to railroad construction in Oregon. In April, 1868, ground was broken at Portland for two roads, one to run on the east side, the other on the west side, of the Willamette River. Five years later the East Side Railroad was completed to Roseburg, in the Umpqua valley, thus bringing the southern Oregon country into connection with the Willamette and the Columbia. From this point the process of construction was very slow, the southern portion being finally completed in 1887 to connect with the Central Pacific.

Henry Villard and the northern railways

Meantime, in 1874, Mr. Henry Villard became interested in this line and in the railroad development of the Pacific Northwest generally. His first grand enterprise was the opening of railway transportation along the Columbia, on the south bank, connecting Portland with The Dalles, the Walla Walla country, and eastern

Oregon. To bring this about he organized, with the enterprising Portland men who controlled the navigation of the Columbia, the Oregon Railway and Navigation Company. The line was first built to Baker City, in the



HENRY VILLARD.

Powder River valley, and later extended to meet the Union Pacific at Granger, Wyoming, running practically along the old emigrant trail up the Lewis River valley. Before this plan could be fully carried out, Mr. Villard also secured control of the Northern Pacific, which had been in process of building from Duluth

at the western extremity of Lake Superior for several years. The union of all these interests under his management gave a mighty impulse to railroad development, such as the country had never before seen. Construction was hurried forward at utmost speed both from the east and from the west, and on the 8th of September, 1883 (in western Montana), the last spike was driven by Mr. Villard in the presence of a throng of visitors from both coasts, and from nearly every country of the Old World.[1] One of the orators on this occasion was Senator J. W. Nesmith, of Oregon, who as a young man had crossed the plains in the great wagon train of 1843. The early settlers of the Northwest had spent the best years of their lives

JAMES WILLIS NESMITH.

[1] "The Memoirs of Henry Villard," 2 vols., Boston, 1904, contains a very interesting sketch of the railroad history of the Northwest to the time of completing the Northern Pacific. The earliest railways in Oregon were portage roads around the obstructions in the Columbia River and were owned by the Navigation Company at the time Villard took control.

under pioneer conditions; but fortunately many of them lived to see the dawning of the new day made possible by their labors and sacrifices.

Later railroad building

Railroad building did not cease with the year 1883, but has been almost continuous from that time to the present. The main line of the Northern Pacific, the Columbia and Lewis River road, the new Great Northern line to the Sound, the connection northward with the Canadian Pacific and southward with the Central Pacific, form the outlines of a system which has gradually been extended, by means of branches, into many new productive regions of the Northwest. The results, while marvelous in themselves, are only such as had long been foretold by those familiar with the resources of the Northwest, and with the effects produced by railroads in other parts of the United States. This becomes plain when we compare the slow progress of the Northwest during the early period with the rapid development which has taken place in the past thirty-four years, and especially in the past twenty-one years, since the completion of the Northern Pacific.

Distribution of population about 1870

In 1870, when this great movement was just beginning, Oregon, Washington, and Idaho had a combined population of 130,000, of which 91,000 belonged to Oregon and only 24,000 to her northern neighbor. Almost exactly one half (64,200) of the total population of the North-

west was still living in the Willamette valley, which even without railroads always had an outlet to a seaport market. The other half was widely distributed, in southern and eastern Oregon, along the coast and the Columbia River in both Oregon and Washington, and through the numerous mining camps of Idaho.[1] The metropolis of the Northwest was Portland, which boasted 8293 inhabitants — an increase since the census of 1860 of 5425.

The Willamette valley and southern Oregon

The great valley of western Oregon was in 1870 the only district of this entire region that was fully settled by an agricultural population; and even here, while the lands were nearly all occupied, large portions of them remained untilled. The grain raised on the farms was shipped down the river to Portland in steamboats, and great herds of cattle were driven across the mountains to supply the mining camps as far east as Montana, and to stock the ranches now beginning to be established in many portions of the Inland Empire. The towns of the valley, aside from Portland, were all mere villages, centers of an agricultural trade. Southern Oregon, where farming, stock

[1] Southern Oregon had about 12,000 people, eastern Oregon 10,500, the coast and Columbia River districts 4250. The counties bordering on the Sound had one half of the 24,000 people in Washington, while the region east of the Cascades had 7000 of the remainder. Idaho contained 15,000 people (lacking one), scattered through a score or more of mining camps.

raising, and mining were all carried on together, was enjoying a fair degree of prosperity; but here also, as on the upper Columbia, no great development in agriculture was possible without railroads to open up a wider market for the products of the soil. The Coos Bay district had already become famous for its coal, and in 1874 sent 45,000 tons to San Francisco.

Lumbering on Puget Sound; social conditions

Puget Sound was acquiring a world-wide reputation for its manufactories of lumber. Soon after the opening of the California market, capitalists from the East and from San Francisco began here the establishment of those enormous lumbering plants which have been the wonder of so many visitors to the Pacific coast. The small water-power mills of the pioneering time sank into insignificance or ceased to exist; while monster steam mills, planted at a few of the most favorable points, practically monopolized the business. Each of the great sawmills supported a settlement, made up at first almost entirely of the company's employés. After a while, with the occupation of the farming lands in their vicinity, some of these grew into important market and shipping points. But the towns of western Washington were for a long time behind Walla Walla both in wealth and in population. In 1870 Olympia, the largest of them, had but 1200 people, while Seattle had 1100, and

Tacoma 73. As late as twenty years ago Seattle had scarcely outgrown the conditions of a village. There was some talk of connecting this region by rail with Oregon on the south, and with the Inland Empire on the east. But nothing had as yet been done, and the Sound country was almost completely shut off from all other sections of the Northwest. Social conditions had been very unsatisfactory in the little lumbering communities, because there were so many single men without homes, and but few families. This difficulty was keenly felt, and very unusual efforts were made to overcome it. In 1866 a shipload of young women was brought to Seattle from the East. This led to the planting of many new homes, promoted farm life, and brought about a great improvement in the character of the settlement. Puget Sound and the entire Northwest owe a debt of gratitude to these excellent women, many of whom, fortunately, are still living to enjoy the prosperity which their coming to this far-off coast did so much to create.[1]

General condition of the Northwest in 1870

Such, briefly, was the situation of the Northwest at the beginning of the railroad age. It was a region containing a score or more of distinct settlements, most of which had little in

[1] "They have proved a blessing to every community from the Cowlitz north to the boundary line." C. B. Bagley in Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society, March, 1904.

common with any of the others. Each went its own way, producing what it could, selling what it might, in the mines, in San Francisco, and in Portland. Because there was little intercourse between the sections, there was a good deal of jealousy and ill will. Politically the Northwest was now divided into three parts, Idaho having been set off as a separate territory in 1863; but the lack of unity within the separate divisions made possible numerous schemes for changes in boundaries, the creation of new territories, and so on. At one time there was a plan to unite the Willamette valley and Puget Sound into one state, making another of the entire inland country; again it was proposed to annex the Walla Walla country to Oregon; to unite northeastern Washington with northern Idaho, and make a separate state of this; to attach southeastern Washington to southern Idaho and eastern Oregon.

Railroad building attracts emigration

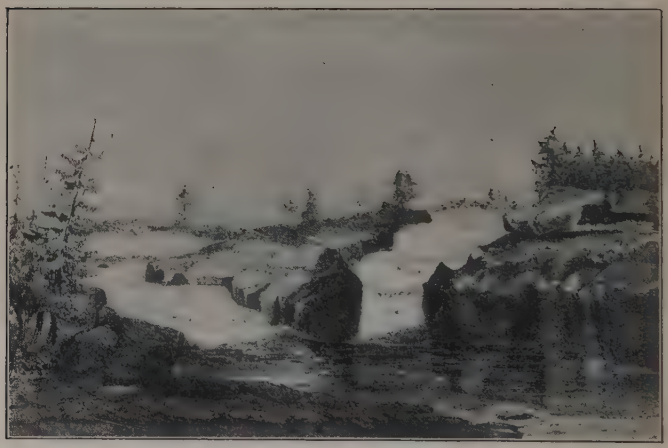
The railroads soon produced a great transformation in almost every respect. The men who were responsible for the construction of these lines were especially anxious to attract emigrants to the Northwest, in order to develop its great resources and thus create business for the roads. Emigration bureaus were formed in cities of the Atlantic coast; pamphlets describing the advantages of the country

were distributed broadcast; and northwestern farm lands were widely advertised in the newspapers. As a result the population of this region began to increase with great rapidity as compared with the period prior to 1870. As already stated, the total for that year was 130,000. In the ten years from 1870 to 1880 there was an addition of 152,500; in the next decade 465,000; while from 1890 to 1900 the gain was 330,000. It is interesting to note that, while California was far in advance of the Northwest when the period began, and continued to lead for another ten years, her increase since 1880 has been very much less. From 1870 to 1880 she received 304,447; in the next decade 343,436; and in the last 271,655. In other words, during the twenty years from 1880 to 1900 this northern region gained 795,000 people as against California's 615,000.

The growth of cities is yet more striking. Thirty-four years ago Portland was the only town approaching 10,000 population. It was already flourishing, but from this time its progress was remarkable. The census of 1880 gives the city 17,577; that of ten years later 46,385; and the last (1900) 90,426. On Puget Sound the village of Tacoma, with 73 inhabitants in 1870 and only 1100 in 1880, leaped by 1890 to 36,000. During the last ten-year period, however, very little gain was made, the

The growth of cities

census of 1900 showing only 37,714. Seattle presents the spectacle of a town which has grown in twenty years from a village of 3533 people to a city of 80,271 people. This surprising result is due largely to the railroads, although Seattle has in recent years gained enormously on account of the trade with



FALLS OF THE SPOKANE.

Alaska. East of the Cascade Mountains, towns have of course grown less rapidly; but there has been substantial progress in all three of the states comprising the Pacific Northwest.[1] Idaho in 1900 had two cities of over 4000 each: Boise, 5957, and Pocatello, 4045; eastern Oregon had two: Baker City, 6663, and

[1] Washington was admitted into the Union on the 11th of November, 1889; Idaho on July 3, 1890.

VIEW OF SEATTLE.

Pendleton, 4406; and eastern Washington two, Walla Walla and Spokane. The first of these contained 10,049 inhabitants; the latter, 36,848.

Spokane and the "Palouse" country

Considering that Spokane is an inland town, her history has been an extraordinary one. A few pioneers settled on "Spokane Prairie" as early as 1862, and stores were opened near the bridge to supply the wants of miners going east into the mountains. But for some years the place remained very insignificant. In 1880 it had but 350 inhabitants. The rapid growth since that time is due mainly to the fact that the railroad opened up near Spokane one of the most wonderful wheat-raising districts in the world, the so-called "Palouse" country, stretching southward toward Lewis River. Having a magnificent water power in its falls, Spokane quickly became a great center for the manufacture of flour, as well as a distributing point both for the rich agricultural region to the south and the mining districts to the north and east.

CHAPTER XIX

THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST OF TO-DAY

The present an age of transformation

THE development of every country depends upon the number, ability, and enterprise of the people inhabiting it. The Pacific Northwest has been especially fortunate in the character of its settlers, who were men and women of the best class from almost every portion of the United States. Until very recently, however, their numbers have been so limited that it has not been possible to make use of more than a small portion of the natural resources which this region affords. As the early traders devoted their energies to securing furs of wild animals, so the early settlers, coming a few thousand annually with ox teams, were interested mainly in obtaining good farms, on which to raise grain and cattle. Although some of them desired to do so, they were unable to make much use of the almost limitless forests of excellent timber, the valuable fisheries of the coasts and rivers, and the opportunities for manufacturing so lavishly provided by nature. And so it has been down to the present time. Men have come to the Northwest primarily for its free lands. The quantity of these which

could be taken up and converted into farms at slight expense was so vast that until now the increase in population has resulted mainly in an enlargement of the cultivated areas. While a few towns have grown with wonderful rapidity, increasing trade, rather than manufacturing, has been the chief cause. Now, however, the population and wealth of the Northwest have both reached the point where a rapid development of all kinds of resources becomes possible; and the astonishing activity manifested everywhere is proof that this country is undergoing a great transformation. From a people pursuing agriculture and commerce as almost the only interests, they are changing rapidly to a complex society, engaged in a multitude of different occupations.

Manufacturing interests and prospects

Good beginnings have already been made in many lines of manufacturing. Flour and lumber are being exported to the markets of the world; manufactures of iron, wool, and paper have reached large proportions; salmon canning is a leading industry of the coast region; and shipbuilding has attained great prominence.[1] But

[1] From the earliest settlement of the country the Columbia River and Puget Sound districts have been engaged in this important business, for which their situation probably affords greater advantages than are possessed by any other portion of the United States. Most of the vessels thus far constructed have been of wood; but the launching of the battleship *Nebraska* at Seattle on the 7th of October, 1904, proves that the Northwestern shipyards are already equipped for building the heaviest iron ships.

in most of these lines there is room for almost indefinite expansion. For example, the Northwest has the greatest body of standing timber now to be found in the United States. The forests of Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota are rapidly disappearing, while the demand for timber in the middle West and the East is increasing. The result is a wholly new activity in northwestern lumber, marked each year by the establishment of many new mills in every portion of the country, and a rapidly growing export trade.

Conditions of life in the smaller towns

The lumber business here, as in the older states, has been a pioneer among manufacturing industries. Plants for the manufacture of excelsior, furniture, wagons, and carriages naturally group themselves around the lumber mills; while the successful establishment of one line of industries always tends to attract others to the same locality. These influences have helped to build up the interior towns, many of which now begin to take on the appearance of cities. They are providing themselves with the modern conveniences, such as electric lighting, water, and sewer systems; streets are scientifically graded, and in a few cases electric railways have already been built. Socially, also, these smaller places are following in the footsteps of the large seaport cities of the Northwest, which in turn keep close touch with the

great centers of population on the Atlantic coast. Churches, benevolent societies, and fraternal orders are everywhere; the common school system is well developed, and high schools, until recently confined to the larger places, are at present being established in all towns of any importance.[1] The movement for town and school libraries, local historical societies, commercial clubs, women's clubs, and other means of intellectual, moral, and scientific development, has already produced good results.

Improvements in farm life

The rural districts have been less fortunate. Most of the farms are large, even in the well-settled sections, thus scattering the population thinly over the country. Moreover, roads have generally been bad, making it difficult for farmers to communicate with each other, or with the neighboring towns. In short, farm life, while independent, healthful, and profitable in a financial way, has here as in many other places been a life of comparative isolation, with all the drawbacks incident to that fact. A strong movement for good roads has recently been inaugurated; rural mail delivery prevails almost everywhere; and many lines of telephone have been established. Just at present there is

[1] There are also numerous academies and colleges maintained by private or denominational means, while each of the three states has its agricultural college, its normal schools for the training of teachers, and its state university.

a decided interest in the building of electric railway systems, a movement which promises to produce a great improvement in the conditions of farm life. At the same time the methods of agriculture are changing, grain raising in many places giving way to dairying, hop raising, and fruit growing, all of which tend to break up the over-large farms, and to draw the country population more closely together.

The irrigation movement

One of the most significant movements of the present time is the development of irrigation schemes, in which the national government, the state governments, and private parties are all taking an active interest. The Inland Empire contains immense stretches of otherwise excellent land which receives naturally too little moisture to produce paying crops. Much of this is so located that water can be supplied artificially; and when this is done a previously desert spot is instantly transformed into a garden. Some of the most charming districts of the Northwest, like Payette valley in Idaho, the Yakima valley in Washington, and Hood River in Oregon, illustrate the effects of irrigation. There are now on foot well-matured plans of reclamation, which, when completed, will provide homes for nearly half a million people on lands till now covered with sage brush. The present extraordinary growth of Idaho and eastern Washington is explained

by this fact. But this is not all. The benefits of irrigation are becoming so well understood that the fruit growers and dairymen of southern Oregon are employing it in order to overcome the disadvantages of their long dry season; and even in the Willamette valley, where the rains continue longer in spring and begin earlier in fall, ditches are being opened to irrigate ordinary farm land. The possibilities presented by this newly awakened interest are far-reaching. Under irrigation a few acres will support a family, and indeed large farms are out of the question. The general adoption of this method of agriculture would mean the frequent division of the present farms and the multiplication of homes, with all the advantages of a dense population over a sparse one.

The new interest in the Northwest

We have thus indicated some of the forces now at work tending to transform the Pacific Northwest, and to give it the importance which the vastness of its territory and multiplicity of its resources have long foreshadowed. Its advantages are becoming understood, and the region is at last beginning to receive that full tide of immigration for which it waited longer than any other great section of the West. It is a movement of both capitalists and laborers. Some are attracted by the opportunities for agriculture; some by the rich and extensive mineral deposits awaiting development; and

others by their interest in commerce and manufacturing. Thoughtful men everywhere have been impressed by the advantage which this region is acquiring from the extension of American commerce in the Orient; from the prospective construction of the Panama Canal; and from the plans now matured for opening the Columbia River beyond the Great Falls, so as to allow large vessels to penetrate far beyond the Cascade Mountains and bring the Inland Empire to the sea.

Blending of the two ages

Just at this time, when growth in all material things is proceeding at so rapid a rate, and when the people of this great section are turning their eyes with joyful anticipation toward the future, the historic past is likewise claiming for itself, through the centennial anniversary of Lewis and Clark's exploration, an increased measure of attention. This is one of the fortunate things in the present situation; for if the spirit of the pioneer age, its rugged independence, strong homely virtues, and wholesome aspirations, can be carried over and blended with the best the new time gives, the future greatness of our civilization in the Northwest is assured.

APPENDIX

GOVERNORS OF OREGON

Provisional Government

David Hill, Alanson Beers, and Joseph Gale	1st Exec. Com., 1843 to 1844
P. G. Stewart, O. Russell, and W. J. Bailey	2d Exec. Com., 1844 to 1845
George Abernethy	June 3, 1845, to March 3, 1849

Territorial Government

Joseph Lane	March 3, 1849, to June 18, 1850
Kintzing Pritchett	June 18, 1850, to Aug. 18, 1850
John P. Gaines	Aug. 18, 1850, to May 16, 1853
Joseph Lane	May 16, 1853, to May 19, 1853
George L. Curry	May 19, 1853, to Dec. 2, 1853
John W. Davis	Dec. 2, 1853, to Aug. 1, 1854
George L. Curry	Aug. 1, 1854, to March 3, 1859

State Government

John Whiteaker	March 3, 1859, to Sept. 10, 1862
A. C. Gibbs	Sept. 10, 1862, to Sept. 12, 1866
George L. Woods	Sept. 12, 1866, to Sept. 14, 1870
La Fayette Grover	Sept. 14, 1870, to Feb. 1, 1877
S. F. Chadwick	Feb. 1, 1877, to Sept. 11, 1878
W. W. Thayer	Sept. 11, 1878, to Sept. 13, 1882
Z. F. Moody	Sept. 13, 1882, to Jan. 12, 1887
Sylvester Pennoyer	Jan. 12, 1887, to Jan. 14, 1895
William P. Lord	Jan. 14, 1895, to Jan. 9, 1899
T. T. Geer	Jan. 9, 1899, to Jan. 14, 1903
George E. Chamberlain	Jan. 14, 1903, to —— ——

GOVERNORS OF WASHINGTON

Territorial Government

Isaac I. Stevens	1853 to 1857
Fayette McMullen	1857 to 1859
R. D. Gholson	1859 to 1861
W. H. Wallace	1861 to 1862
W. M. Pickering	1862 to 1866
George E. Cole	1866 to 1867
Marshal F. Moore	1867 to 1869
Alvin Flanders	1869 to 1870
Edward S. Salomon	1870 to 1872
Elisha P. Ferry	1872 to 1880
W. A. Newell	1880 to 1884
Watson C. Squire	1884 to 1887
Eugene Semple	1887 to 1889
Miles C. Moore	1889

State Government

Elisha P. Ferry	1889 to 1893
John H. McGraw	1893 to 1897
John R. Rogers	1897 to 1901
Henry McBride	1901 to 1905
Albert E. Mead	1905

GOVERNORS OF IDAHO

Territorial Government

William H. Wallace	March 10, 1863, to Feb. 26, 1864
Caleb Lyon	Feb. 26, 1864, to April 10, 1866
David M. Ballard	April 10, 1866, to March 30, 1870
Samuel Bard	March 30, 1870, to June 7, 1870
Gilman Marston	June 7, 1870, to Jan. 12, 1871
Alexander H. Connor	Jan. 12, 1871, to April 19, 1871
Thomas M. Bowen	April 19, 1871, to Oct. 24, 1871
Thomas W. Bennett	Oct. 24, 1871, to Dec. 16, 1875
David P. Thompson	Dec. 16, 1875, to July 24, 1876

Mason Brayman	July 24, 1876, to Aug. 7, 1878
John P. Hoyt	Aug. 7, 1878, to July 12, 1880
John B. Neil	July 12, 1880, to March 2, 1883
John N. Irwin	March 2, 1883, to March 26, 1884
William M. Bunn	March 26, 1884, to Sept. 29, 1885
Edward A. Stevenson	Sept. 29, 1885, to April 1, 1889
George L. Shoup	April 1, 1889, to ——, 1890

State Government

George L. Shoup	1890 to 1891
N. B. Willey	1891 to 1892
William J. McConnell	1893 to 1897
Frank Steunenberg	1897 to 1901
Frank W. Hunt	1901 to 1903
John T. Morrison	1903 to 1905
Frank R. Gooding	1905

U. S. SENATORS FROM OREGON

Delazon Smith	Feb. 14, 1859, to Nov. 3, 1859
Joseph Lane	Feb. 14, 1859, to March 3, 1861
Edward D. Baker	March 4, 1861, to Oct. 21, 1861
Benjamin Stark	Oct. 21, 1861, to Sept. 11, 1862
Benjamin F. Harding	Sept. 11, 1862, to March 3, 1865
James W. Nesmith	March 4, 1861, to March 3, 1867
George H. Williams	March 4, 1865, to March 3, 1871
Henry W. Corbett	March 4, 1867, to March 3, 1873
James K. Kelley	March 4, 1871, to March 3, 1877
John H. Mitchell	March 4, 1873, to March 3, 1879
John H. Mitchell	March 4, 1885, to March 3, 1897
John H. Mitchell	March 4, 1901 (term expires March 3, 1907)
La Fayette Grover	March 4, 1879, to March 3, 1883
Joseph N. Dolph	March 4, 1883, to March 3, 1895
George W. McBride	March 4, 1895, to March 3, 1901
Henry W. Corbett	(Appointed by Governor, not seated; 1897)
Joseph Senion	Oct. 8, 1898, to March 3, 1903
Charles W. Fulton,	March 4, 1903 (term expires March 3, 1909)

U. S. SENATORS FROM WASHINGTON

Watson C. Squire . . . . March 4, 1889, to March 3, 1897
John B. Allen . . . . . March 4, 1889, to March 3, 1893
John B. Allen . . (Appointed by Governor, not seated; 1893)
John L. Wilson . . . . . March 4, 1895, to March 3, 1899
George Turner . . . . . March 4, 1897, to March 3, 1903
Addison G. Foster . . . . March 4, 1899, to March 3, 1905
Levi Ankeny . . March 4, 1903 (term expires March 3, 1909)
Samuel H. Piles . March 4, 1905 (term expires March 3, 1911)

U. S. SENATORS FROM IDAHO

William J. McConnell . . . January, 1891, to March 3, 1891
George L. Shoup . . . . . January, 1891, to March 3, 1901
Fred T. Dubois . . . . . March 4, 1891, to March 3, 1897
Henry Heitfeld . . . . . March 4, 1897, to March 3, 1903
Fred T. Dubois . March 4, 1901 (term expires March 3, 1907)
Weldon B. Heyburn, March 4, 1903 (term expires March 3, 1909)

CONGRESSIONAL REPRESENTATIVES FROM OREGON

Territorial Period

Samuel R. Thurston . . . . Feb. 15, 1849, to April 9, 1851
Joseph Lane . . . . . June 2, 1851, to Feb. 14, 1859

Statehood Period

La Fayette Grover . . . . Feb. 15, 1859, to March 3, 1859
Lansing Stout . . . . . March 4, 1859, to March 3, 1861
George K. Shiel . . . . . March 4, 1861, to March 3, 1863
John R. McBride . . . . . March 4, 1863, to March 3, 1865
J. H. D. Henderson . . . . March 4, 1865, to March 3, 1867
Rufus Mallory . . . . . March 4, 1867, to March 3, 1869
Joseph S. Smith . . . . . March 4, 1869, to March 3, 1871
James H. Slater . . . . . March 4, 1871, to March 3, 1873
Joseph S. Wilson . . . . . (Died before qualifying, 1873)

James W. Nesmith . . . . March 4, 1873, to March 3, 1875
George A. La Dow . . . . (Died before qualifying, 1875)
La Fayette Lane . . . . . Oct. 25, 1875, to March 3, 1877
Richard Williams . . . . . March 4, 1877, to March 3, 1879
John Whiteaker . . . . . March 4, 1879, to March 3, 1881
M. C. George . . . . . March 4, 1881, to March 3, 1885
Binger Herman . . . . . March 4, 1885, to March 3, 1899
W. R. Ellis . . . . . March 4, 1893, to March 3, 1899
Thomas H. Tongue, March 4, 1897, to Jan. 11, 1903 (died in office)
Malcolm A. Moody . . . . March 4, 1899, to March 3, 1903
Binger Herman, June 1, 1903 (present term expires March 3, 1907)
John N. Williamson . . March 4, 1903 (present term expires March 3, 1907)

CONGRESSIONAL REPRESENTATIVES FROM WASHINGTON

Territorial Period

Columbia Lancaster . . . . . 1854 to 1855
J. Patton Anderson . . . . . 1855 to 1857
Isaac I. Stevens . . . . . 1857 to 1861
W. H. Wallace . . . . . 1861 to 1863
George E. Cole . . . . . 1863 to 1865
A. A. Denny . . . . . 1865 to 1867
Alvan Flanders . . . . . 1867 to 1869
S. Garfielde . . . . . 1869 to 1872
A. B. McFadden . . . . . 1872 to 1874
Orange Jacobs . . . . . 1874 to 1878
Thomas H. Brents . . . . . 1878 to 1884
C. S. Voorhees . . . . . 1884 to 1888
John B. Allen . . . . . 1888 to 1889

Statehood Period

John L. Wilson . . . . . March 4, 1889, to March 3, 1895
W. H. Doolittle . . . . . March 4, 1893, to March 3, 1897
S. C. Hyde . . . . . March 4, 1895, to March 3, 1897
W. L. Jones, March 4, 1897 (present term expires March 3, 1907)
James Hamilton Lewis . . . March 4, 1897, to March 3, 1899

F. W. Cushman . . . . . March 4, 1899, to Nov. 4, 1905
William E. Humphrey . March 4, 1905 (present term expires March 3, 1907)

CONGRESSIONAL REPRESENTATIVES FROM IDAHO

Territorial Period

William H. Wallace . . . . March 4, 1864, to March 3, 1865
Edward D. Holbrook . . . March 4, 1865, to March 3, 1869
Jacob K. Shafer . . . . . March 4, 1869, to March 3, 1871
Samuel A. Merritt . . . . March 4, 1871, to March 3, 1873
Stephen S. Fenn . . . . . March 4, 1873, to March 3, 1877
John Hailey . . . . . March 4, 1877, to March 3, 1879
George Ainslie . . . . . March 4, 1879, to March 3, 1883
Theodore F. Singiser . . . March 4, 1883, to March 3, 1885
John Hailey . . . . . March 4, 1885, to March 3, 1887
Fred T. Dubois . . . . . March 4, 1887, to Jan. , 1890

Statehood Period

Willis Sweet . . . . . January, 1890, to March 3, 1893
Edgar Wilson . . . . . March 4, 1893, to March 3, 1897
James Gunn . . . . . March 4, 1897, to March 3, 1901
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Burton L. French . . . March 4, 1903 (present term expires March 3, 1907)

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